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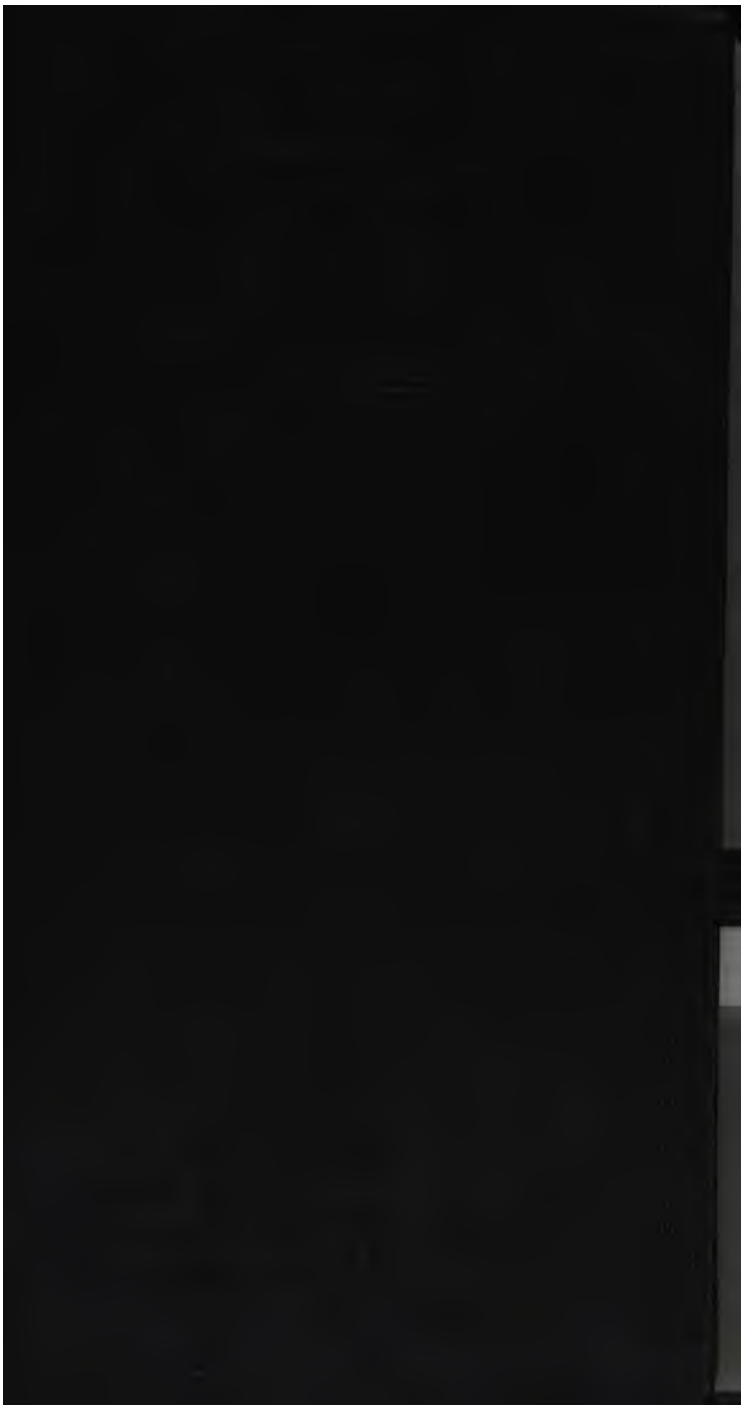

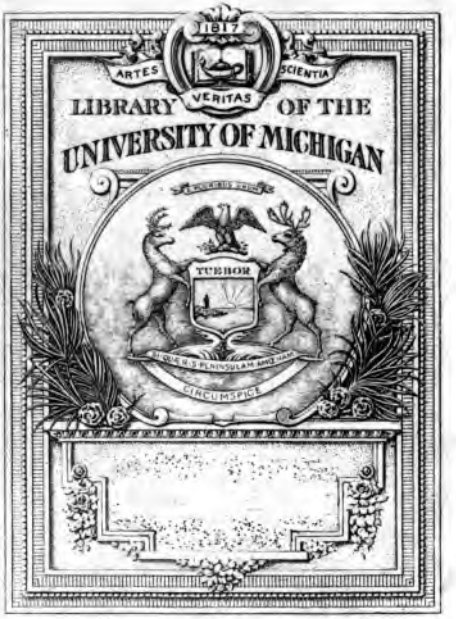
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Story of Almet the Derzise.
Vol. IV. N°114.

I found myself sitting on the declivity of a mount ain & perceived at my right hand an angel whom I knew to be Azor ain the minister of reproof

Published by Silvester Doig Royal Exchange Edinburgh 1793.

THE

ADVENTURER.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

——Tentanda via eſt; quâ me quoque poſſim
Tollere humo, victorque virûm volitare per ora. VIRG.

On vent'rous wing in queſt of praiſe I go,
And leave the gazing multitude below.

A NEW EDITION,

ILLUSTRATED WITH FRONTISPIECES.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR SILVESTER DOIG, ROYAL EXCHANGE, EDINBURGH.

1793.

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THE ADVENTURER.

No. CVI. Saturday, November 10. 1753.

Quo moriture ruis?— VIRG.

Why wilt thou ruſh to Death?— DRYDEN.

I HAVE before remarked that human wit has never been able to render courage, contemptible by ridicule: though courage, as it is ſometimes a proof of exalted virtue, is alſo frequently an indication of enormous vice; for if he who effects a good purpoſe at the riſk of life, is allowed to have the ſtrongeſt propenſity to good, it muſt be granted, that he who at the riſk of life effects an evil purpoſe, has an equal propenſity to evil. But as ridicule has not diſtinguiſhed courage into virtue and vice, neither has it yet diſtinguiſhed inſenſibility from courage.

Every paſſion becomes weak in proportion as it is familiar with its object. Evil muſt be conſidered as the object of fear; but the paſſion is excited only when

are equally fatal, and are frequently found in the ſame mind.

A peaſant in the north of England had two ſons, Thomas and John. Tom was taken to ſea when he was very young, by the maſter of a ſmall veſſel who lived at Hull; and Jack continued to work with his father till he was near thirty. Tom, who was now become maſter of a ſmack himſelf, took his brother on board for London, and promiſed to procure him ſome employment among the ſhipping on the water ſide. After they had been ſome hours under ſail, the wind became contrary, and blew very freſh; the waves began immediately to ſwell, daſhing with violence againſt the prow, whitened into foam. The veſſel, which now plied to windward lay ſo much on one ſide, that the edge was frequently under water; and Jack, who expected it to overſet every moment, was ſeized with terror which he could not conceal. He earneſtly requeſted of Tom, that the ſails might be taken in; and lamented the folly that had expoſed him to the violence of a tempeſt, from which he could not without a miracle eſcape. Tom, with a ſovereign contempt of his puſillanimity, derided his diſtreſs; and Jack, on the contrary, admired the bravery of Tom and his crew, from whoſe countenances and behaviour he at length derived ſome hope; he believed he had deſerved the reproach which he ſuffered, and deſpiſed himſelf for the fear which he could not ſhake off. In the mean time the gale increaſed, and in leſs than an hour it blew a ſtorm. Jack, who watched every countenance with the utmoſt attention and ſolicitude, thought that his fears were now juſtified by the looks of the ſailors; he, therefore, renewed his complaint, and perceiving his brother ſtill

unconcerned,

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boat into the water, perſuaded his brother to quit the veſſel, and in about four hours they got ſafe on ſhore.

If the veſſel had weathered the ſtorm, Tom would have been deemed a hero, and Jack a coward: but I hope that none, whom I have led into this train of thought, will, for the future, regard inſenſibility of danger as an indication of courage: or impute cowardice to thoſe whoſe fear is not inadequate to its object, or too violent to anſwer its purpoſe.

There is one evil, of which multitudes are in perpetual danger; an evil, to which every other is as the drop of the bucket, and the duſt of the balance; and yet of this danger the greater part appear to be totally inſenſible.

Every man who waſtes in neligence the day of ſalvation, ſtands on the brink not only of the grave but of hell. That the danger of all is imminent, appears by the terms that Infinite Wiſdom has choſen to expreſs the conduct by which alone it can be eſcaped; it is called, "a race, a watch, a work to be wrought with "fear and trembling, a ſtrife unto blood, and a com-"bat with whatever can ſeduce or terrify, with the "pleaſures of ſenſe and the power of angels." The moment in which we ſhall be ſnatched from the brink of this gulph, or plunged to the bottom, no power can either avert or retard; it approaches ſilent, indeed, as the flight of time, but rapid and irreſiſtible as the courſe of a comet. That dreadful evil, which, with equal force and propriety is called the Second Death, ſhould not, ſurely, be diſregarded, merely becauſe it has been long impending; and as there is no equivalent for which a man can reaſonably determine to ſuffer, it cannot be conſidered as the object of courage. How it

may

may be borne, ſhould not be the inquiry, but how it may be ſhunned. And if in this daring age it is impoſſible to prepare for eternity, without giving up the character of a hero, no reaſonable being, ſurely, will be deterred by this conſideration from the attempt; for who but an infant, or an idiot, would give up his paternal inheritance for a feather, or renounce the acclamations of a triumph for the tinkling of a rattle?

No. CVII. Tueſday, November 13. 1753.

———*Sub judice lis eſt.* HOR.

And of their vain diſputings find no end.

FRANCIS.

IT has been ſometimes aſked by thoſe, who find the appearance of wiſdom more eaſily attained by queſtions than ſolutions, how it comes to paſs, that the world is divided by ſuch difference of opinion; and why men, equally reaſonable, and equally lovers of truth, do not always think in the ſame manner?

With regard to ſimple propoſitions, where the terms are underſtood, and the whole ſubject is comprehended at once, there is ſuch an uniformity of ſentiment among all human beings, that, for many ages, a very numerous

ſet of notions were ſuppoſed to be innate, or neceſſarily co-exiſtent with the faculty of reaſon: it being imagined, that univerſal agreement could proceed only from the invariable dictates of the univerſal parent.

In queſtions diffuſe and compounded, this ſimilarity of determination is no longer to be expected. At our firſt ſally into the intellectual world, we all march together along one ſtraight and open road; but as we proceed further, and wider proſpects open to our view, every eye fixes upon a different ſcene; we divide into various paths, and, as we move forward, are ſtill at a greater diſtance from each other. As a queſtion becomes more complicated and involved, and extends to a greater number of relations, diſagreement of opinion will always be multiplied; not becauſe we are irrational, but becauſe we are finite beings, furniſhed with different kinds of knowledge, exerting different degrees of attention, one diſcovering conſequences which eſcape another, none taking in the whole concatenation of cauſes and effects, and moſt comprehending but a very ſmall part, each comparing what he obſerves with a different criterion, and each referring it to a different purpoſe.

Where, then, is the wonder, that they who ſee only a ſmall part, ſhould judge erroneouſly of the whole? or that they, who ſee different and diſſimilar parts, ſhould judge differently from each other?

Whatever has various reſpects, muſt have various appearances of good and evil, beauty or deformity; thus, the gardener tears up as a weed the plant which the phyſician gathers as a medicine; and "a "general," ſays Sir Kenelm Digby, "will look with "pleaſure over a plain, as a fit place on which the fate "*of empires* might be decided in battle, which the

"farmer

" farmer will deſpiſe as bleak and barren, neither " fruitful of paſturage, nor fit for tillage."

Two men examining the ſame queſtion proceed commonly like the phyſician and gardener in ſelecting herbs, or the farmer and hero looking on the plain; they bring minds impreſſed with different notions, and direct their inquiries to different ends; they form, therefore, contrary concluſions, and each wonders at the other's abſurdity.

We have leſs reaſon to be ſurpriſed or offended when we find others differ from us in opinion, becauſe we very often differ from ourſelves. How often we alter our minds, we do not always remark; becauſe the change is ſometimes made imperceptibly and gradually, and the laſt conviction effaces all memory of the former: yet every man, accuſtomed from time to time to take a ſurvey of his own notions, will by a ſlight retroſpection be able to diſcover, that his mind has ſuffered many revolutions; that the ſame things have in the ſeveral parts of his life been condemned and approved, purſued and ſhunned: and that on many occaſions, even when his practice has been ſteady, his mind has been wavering, and he has perſiſted in a ſcheme of action, rather becauſe he feared the cenſure of inconſtancy, than becauſe he was always pleaſed with his own choice.

Of the different faces ſhewn by the ſame objects as they are viewed on oppoſite ſides, and of the different inclinations which they muſt conſtantly raiſe in him that contemplates them, a more ſtriking example cannot eaſily be found, than two Greek Epigrammiſts will afford us in their accounts of human life, which I ſhall lay before the reader in Engliſh proſe.

Poſidippus, a comic poet, utters this complaint; "Through which of the paths of life is it eligible to "paſs? In public aſſemblies are debates and trouble- "ſome affairs: domeſtic privacies are haunted with "anxieties; in the country is labour; on the ſea is "terror: in a foreign land, he that has money muſt "live in fear, he that wants it muſt pine in diſtreſs; "are you married? you are troubled with ſuſpicions; "are you ſingle? you languiſh in ſolitude; children "occaſion toil, and a childleſs life is a ſtate of deſtitu- "tion; the time of youth is a time of folly, and gray "hairs are loaded with infirmity. This choice only, "therefore, can be made, either never to receive be- "ing, or immediately to loſe it."

Such and ſo gloomy is the proſpect, which Poſidippus has laid before us. But we are not to acquieſce too haſtily in his determination againſt the value of exiſtence: for Metrodorus, a philoſopher of Athens, has ſhewn, that life has pleaſures as well as pains; and having exhibited the preſent ſtate of man in brighter colours, draws, with equal appearance of reaſon, a contrary concluſion.

"You may paſs well through any of the paths of "life. In public aſſemblies are honours and tranſac- "tions of wiſdom; in domeſtic privacy, is ſtillneſs "and quiet; in the country are the beauties of nature; "on the ſea is the hope of gain; in a foreign land, he "that is rich is honoured, he that is poor may keep "his poverty ſecret; are you married? you have a "cheerful houſe; are you ſingle? you are unincum- "bered; children are objects of affection, to be with- "out children is to be without care; the time of "youth is the time of vigour, and gray hairs are made

"venerable

" venerable by piety. It will, therefore, never be a " wiſe man's choice, either not to obtain exiſtence, or " to loſe it; for every ſtate of life has its felicity."

In theſe epigrams are included moſt of the queſtions which have engaged the ſpeculations of the inquirers after happineſs; and though they will not much aſſiſt our determinations, they may, perhaps, equally promote our quiet, by ſhewing that no abſolute determination ever can be formed.

Whether a public ſtation, or private life be deſirable, has always been debated. We ſee here both the allurements and diſcouragements of civil employments: on one ſide there is trouble, on the other honour; the management of affairs is vexatious and difficult, but it is the only duty in which wiſdom can be conſpicuouſly diſplayed: it muſt then ſtill be left to every man to chooſe either eaſe or glory; nor can any general precept be given, ſince no man can be happy by the preſcription of another.

Thus, what is ſaid of children by Poſidippus, " that " they are occaſions of fatigue," and by Metrodorus, " that they are objects of affection," is equally certain; but whether they will give moſt pain or pleaſure, muſt depend on their future conduct and diſpoſitions, on many cauſes over which the parent can have little influence: there is, therefore, room for all the caprices of imagination, and deſire muſt be proportioned to the hope or fear that ſhall happen to predominate.

Such is the uncertainty in which we are always likely to remain with regard to queſtions, wherein we have moſt intereſt, and which every day affords us freſh opportunity to examine: we may examine, indeed, but

we never can decide, becauſe our faculties are unequal to the ſubject: we ſee a little, and form an opinion; we ſee more, and change it.

This inconſtancy and unſteadineſs, to which we muſt ſo often find ourſelves liable, ought certainly to teach us moderation and forbearance towards thoſe who cannot accommodate themſelves to our ſentiments: if they are deceived, we have no right to attribute their miſtake to obſtinacy or negligence, becauſe we likewiſe have been miſtaken; we may, perhaps, again change our own opinion: and what excuſe ſhall we be able to find for averſion and malignity conceived againſt him, whom we ſhall then find to have committed no fault, and who offended us only by refuſing to follow us into error?

It may likewiſe contibute to ſoften that reſentment which pride naturally raiſes againſt oppoſition, if we conſider, that he who differs from us, does not always contradict us; he has one view of an object, and we have another; each deſcribes what he ſees with equal fidelity, and each regulates his ſteps by his own eyes: one man, with Poſidippus, looks on celibacy as a ſtate of gloomy ſolitude, without a partner in joy or a comforter in ſorrow; the other conſiders it, with Metrodorus, as a ſtate free from incumbrances, in which a man is at liberty to chooſe his own gratifications, to remove from place to place in queſt of pleaſure, and to think of nothing but merriment and diverſion: full of theſe notions one haſtens to chooſe a wife, and the other laughs at his raſhneſs, or pities his ignorance; yet it is poſſible that each is right, but that each is right only for himſelf.

Life

Life is not the object of ſcience: we ſee a little, very little; and what is beyond we only can conjecture. If we inquire of thoſe who have gone before us, we receive ſmall ſatisfaction; ſome have travelled life without obſervation, and ſome willingly miſlead us. The only thought, therefore, on which we can repoſe with comfort, is that which preſents to us the care of Providence, whoſe eye takes in the whole of things, and under whoſe direction all involuntary errors will terminate in happineſs.

No. CVIII. Saturday November 17. 1753.

Nobis, cum ſimul occidit brevis lux,
Nox eſt perpetuo una dormienda. CATULLUS.

When once the ſhort-liv'd mortal dies,
A night eternal ſeals his eyes.
ADDISON.

IT may have been obſerved by every reader, that there are certain topics which never are exhauſted. Of ſome images and ſentiments the mind of man may be ſaid to be enamoured; it meets them, however often they occur, with the ſame ardour which a lover feels at the ſight

ſight of his miſtreſs, and parts from them with the ſame reluctance when they can no longer be enjoyed.

Of this kind are many deſcriptions which the poets have tranſcribed from each other, and their ſucceſſors will probably copy to the end of time; which will continue to engage, or, as the French term it, to flatter the imagination, as long as human nature ſhall remain the ſame.

When a poet mentions the ſpring, we know that the zephyrs are about to whiſper, that the groves are to recover their verdure, the linnets to warble forth their notes of love, and the flocks and herds to friſk over vales painted with flowers: yet, who is there ſo inſenſible of the beauties of nature, ſo little delighted with the renovation of the world, as not to feel his heart bound at the mention of the ſpring.

When night overſhadows a romantic ſcene, all is ſtillneſs, ſilence, and quiet; the poets of the grove ceaſe their melody, the moon towers over the world in gentle majeſty, men forget their labours and their cares, and every paſſion and purſuit is for a while ſuſpended. All this we know already, yet we hear it repeated without wearineſs; becauſe ſuch is generally the life of man, that he is pleaſed to think on the time when he ſhall pauſe from a ſenſe of his condition.

When a poetical grove invites us to its covert, we know that we ſhall find what we have already ſeen, a limped brook murmuring over pebbles, a bank diverſified with flowers, a green arch that excludes the ſun, and a natural grot ſhaded with myrtles; yet who can forbear to enter the pleaſing gloom, to enjoy coolneſs and privacy, and gratify himſelf once more by ſcenes with which nature has formed him to be delighted?

Many

Many moral ſentiments likewiſe are ſo adapted to our ſtate that we find approbation whenever they ſolicit it, and are ſeldom read without exciting a gentle emotion in the mind: ſuch is the compariſon of the life of man with the duration of a flower, a thought which, perhaps, every nation has heard warbled in its own language, from the Inſpired Poets of the Hebrews to our own times: yet this compariſon muſt always pleaſe, becauſe every heart feels its juſtneſs, and every hour confirms it by example.

Such, likewiſe, is the precept that directs us to uſe the preſent hour, and refer nothing to a diſtant time, which we are uncertain whether we ſhall reach: this every moraliſt may venture to inculcate, becauſe it will always be approved, and becauſe it is always forgotten.

This rule is, indeed, every day enforced, by arguments more powerful than the diſſertations of moraliſts: we ſee men pleaſing themſelves with future happineſs, fixing a certain hour for the completion of their wiſhes, and periſhing ſome at a greater and ſome at a leſs diſtance from the happy time; all complaining of their diſappointments, and lamenting that they had ſuffered the years which Heaven allowed them, to paſs without improvement, and deferred the principal purpoſe of their lives to the time when life itſelf was to forſake them.

It is not only uncertain, whether, through all the caſualties and dangers which beſet the life of man, we ſhall be able to reach the time appointed for happineſs or wiſdom; but it is likely, that whatever now hinders us from doing that which our reaſon and conſcience declare neceſſary to be done, will equally obſtruct us in

times

times to come. It is eaſy for the imagination, operating on things not yet exiſting, to pleaſe itſelf with ſcenes of unmingled felicity, or plan out courſes of uniform virtue: but good and evil are in real life inſeparably united; habits grow ſtronger by indulgence; and reaſon loſes her dignity, in proportion as ſhe has oftener yielded to temptation: "he that cannot live well to-day," ſays Martial, "will be leſs qualified to live well "to-morrow."

Of the uncertainty of every human good, every human being ſeems to be convinced; yet this uncertainty is voluntarily increaſed by unneceſſary delay, whether we reſpect external cauſes, or conſider the nature of our own minds. He that now feels a deſire to do right, and wiſhes to regulate his life according to his reaſon, is not ſure that, at any future time aſſignable, he ſhall be able to rekindle the ſame ardour; he that has now an opportunity offered him of breaking looſe from vice and folly, cannot know, but that he ſhall hereafter be more entangled, and ſtruggle for freedom without obtaining it.

We are ſo unwilling to believe any thing to our own diſadvantage, that we will always imagine the perſpicacity of our judgment and the ſtrength of our reſolution, more likely to increaſe than to grow leſs by time; and, therefore, conclude, that the will to purſue laudable purpoſes will be always ſeconded by the power.

But however we may be decived in calculating the ſtrength of our faculties, we cannot doubt the uncertainty of that life in which they muſt be employed: we ſee every day the unexpected death of our friends and our enemies; we ſee new graves hourly opened for men older and younger than ourſelves, for the cautious and

the

the careleſs, the diſſolute and the temperate, for men who like us were providing to enjoy or improve hours now irreverſibly cut off; we ſee all this, and yet, inſtead of living, let year glide after year in preparations to live.

Men are ſo frequently cut off in the midſt of their projections, that ſudden death cauſes little emotion in them that behold it, unleſs it be impreſſed upon the attention by uncommon circumſtances. I, like every other man, have outlived multitudes, have ſeen ambition ſink in its triumphs, and beauty periſh in its bloom; but have been ſeldom ſo much affected as by the fate of Euryalus, whom I lately loſt as I began to love him.

Euryalus had for ſome time flouriſhed in a lucrative profeſſion; but having ſuffered his imagination to be fired by an unextinguiſhable curioſity, he grew weary of the ſame dull round of life, reſolved to harraſs himſelf no longer with the drudgery of getting money, but to quit his buſineſs and his profit, and enjoy for a few years the pleaſures of travel. His friends heard him proclaim his reſolution without ſuſpecting that he intended to purſue it; but he was conſtant to his purpoſe, and with great expedition cloſed his accounts and ſold his moveables, paſſed a few days in bidding farewel to his companions, and with all the eagerneſs of romantic chivalry croſſed the ſea in ſearch of happineſs. Whatever place was renowned in ancient or modern hiſtory, whatever region art or nature had diſtinguiſhed, he determined to viſit: full of deſign and hope he landed on the continent; his friends expected accounts from him of the new ſcenes that opened

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in his progreſs, but were informed in a few days that Euryalus was dead.

Such was the end of Euryalus. He is entered that ſtate, whence none ever ſhall return: and can now only benefit his friends, by remaining in their memories a permanent and efficacious inſtance of the blindneſs of deſire, and the uncertainty of all terreſtrial good. But, perhaps, every man has like me loſt an Euryalus, has known a friend die with happineſs in his graſp; and yet every man continues to think himſelf ſecure of life, and defers to ſome future time of leiſure what he knows it will be fatal to have finally omitted.

It is, indeed, with this as with other frailties inherent in our nature; the deſire of deferring to another time, what cannot be done without endurance of ſome pain, or forbearance of ſome pleaſure, will, perhaps, never be totally overcome or ſuppreſſed; there will always be ſomething that we ſhall wiſh to have finiſhed, and be nevertheleſs unwilling to begin: but againſt this unwillingneſs it is our duty to ſtruggle, and every conqueſt over our paſſions will make way for an eaſier conqueſt; cuſtom is equally forcible to bad and good; nature will always be at variance with reaſon, but will rebel more feebly as ſhe is oftener ſubdued.

The common neglect of the preſent hour is more ſhameful and criminal, as no man is betrayed to it by error, but admits by negligence. Of the inſtability of life, the weakeſt underſtanding never thinks wrong, though the ſtrongeſt often omits to think juſtly: reaſon and experience are always ready to inform us of our real ſtate; but we refuſe to liſten to their ſuggeſtions, becauſe we feel our hearts unwilling to obey them; but, ſurely, nothing is more unworthy of a reaſonable being,

being, than to ſhut his eyes, when he ſees the road which he is commanded to travel, that he may deviate with fewer reproaches from himſelf; nor could any motive to tenderneſs, except the conſciouſneſs that we have all been guilty of the ſame fault, diſpoſe us to pity thoſe who thus conſign themſelves to voluntary ruin.

No. CIX. Tueſday, Nov. 20. 1753.

Inſanire putas ſolemnia me, neque rides. HOR.

You think me but as mad as all mankind.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR,

MONTESQUIEU wittily obſerves, that by building profeſſed mad-houſes men tacitly inſinuate, that all who are out of their ſenſes are to be found only in thoſe places. This remark having made ſome impreſſion on my mind, produced laſt night the following viſion.

I imagined that Bedlam had been ordered to be rebuilt upon a more extenſive plan by act of parliament; and

and that Dean Swift, calling at my lodgings, offered to accompany me to ſee the new-erected edifice, which he obſerved, was not half capacious enough before to contain the various ſpecies of madneſs that are to be found in this kingdom. As we walked through the galleries, he gave me the following account of the ſeveral inhabitants.

The lady in the firſt apartment had prevailed upon her huſband, a man of ſtudy and economy, to indulge her with a route twice a week at her own houſe. This ſoon multiplied her obligations to the company ſhe kept, and in a fortnight ſhe inſiſted upon two more. His lordſhip venturing to oppoſe her demand with ſteady reſolution, but with equal tenderneſs, the lady complained, that the rights of quality and fortune were invaded, that her credit was loſt with the faſhionable world, and that ignorance and brutality had robbed her of the pleaſures of a reaſonable being, and rendered her the moſt unhappy wife in Great Britain. The cauſe of her complaints, however, ſtill ſubſiſted, and by perpetually brooding over it ſhe at length turned her brain.

Next to her is a dramatic writer, whoſe comedy having been juſtly damned, he began to vent his ſpleen againſt the public, by weekly abuſes of the preſent age; but as neither the play nor his defences of it were read, his indignation continually increaſed, till at length it terminated in madneſs.

He on the right hand is a philoſopher, who has loſt his reaſon in a fruitleſs attempt to diſcover the cauſe of electricity.

He on the left is a celebrated jockey of noble birth, whoſe favourite mare, that had enjoyed three triumphs

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in former ſeaſons, was diſtanced a few days ago at Newmarket.

Yonder meagre man has bewildered his underſtanding by cloſely ſtudying the doctrine of chances, in order to qualify himſelf for a profeſſorſhip, which will be ſhortly eſtabliſhed and amply endowed at an eminent chocolate-houſe, where lectures on this important ſubject are conſtantly to be read.

An unforeſeen accident turned the head of the next unfortunate priſoner. She had for a long time paſſed for fifteen years younger than ſhe was, and her lively behaviour and airy dreſs concurred to help forward the impoſition; till one evening, being animated with an extraordinary flow of ſpirits, ſhe danced out ſeven of her artificial teeth, which were immediately picked up, and delivered to her with great ceremony by her partner.

The merchant in the neighbouring cell had reſolved to gain a plumb. He was poſſeſſed of ſeventy thouſand pounds, and eagerly expected a ſhip that was to complete his wiſhes. But the ſhip was caſt away in the channel, and the merchant is diſtracted for his loſs.

That diſconſolate lady had for many years aſſiduouſly attended an old gouty uncle, had aſſented to all his abſurdities, and humoured all his foibles, in full expectation of being made his executrix; when happening one day to affirm that his gruel had ſack enough in it, contrary to his opinion, he altered his will immediately, and left all to her brother; which affords her no conſolation, for avarice is able to ſubdue the tenderneſs of nature.

Behold the beautiful and virtuous Theodora! Her fondneſs for an ungrateful huſband was unparalleled.

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She detected him in the arms of a diſagreeable and affected proſtitute, and was driven to diſtraction.

Is my old friend the commentator here likewiſe? Alas! he has loſt his wits in inquiring whether or no the ancients wore perukes? as did his neighbour Cynthio, by receiving a frown from his patron at the laſt levee.

The fat lady, upon whom you look ſo earneſtly, is a grocer's wife in the city. Her diſorder was occaſioned by her ſeeing at court, laſt Twelfth night, the daughter of Mr. Alderman Squeeze, oil-man, in a ſack far richer and more elegant than her own.

The next chamber contains an adventurer who purchaſed thirty tickets in the laſt lottery. As he was a perſon of a ſanguine complexion and lively imagination, he was ſure of gaining the ten thouſand pounds by the number of his chances. He ſpent a month in ſurveying the counties that lie in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, before he could find out an agreeable ſite for the fine houſe he intended to build. He next fixed his eye on a moſt blooming and beautiful girl, whom he deſigned to honour as his bride. He beſpoke a magnificent coach, and the ornaments of his harneſs were to be of his own invention. Mr. Degagée, the taylor, was ordered to ſend to Paris for the lace with which his wedding clothes were to be adorned. But in the midſt of theſe preparations for proſperity, all his tickets were drawn blanks; and inſtead of his villa on the banks of the Thames, you now ſee him in theſe melancholy lodgings.

His neighbour in the next apartment was an honeſt footman, who was perſuaded likewiſe to try his fortune

tune in the ſame lottery; and who, obtaining a very large and unexpected ſum, could not ſtand the ſhock of ſuch ſudden good fortune, but grew mad with exceſs of joy.

You wonder to ſee that cell beautified with Chineſe vaſes and urns. It is inhabited by that famous virtuoſo lady Harriet Brittle, whoſe opinion was formerly deciſive at all auctions, where ſhe was uſually appealed to about the genuineneſs of porcelain. She purchaſed at an exorbitant price, a Mandarin, and a Jos, that were the envy of all the female connoiſſeurs, and were allowed to be ineſtimable. They were to be placed at the upper end of a little rock-work temple of Chineſe architecture, in which neither propriety, proportion, nor true beauty, were conſidered, and were carefully packed up in different boxes; but the brutiſh waggoner happening to overturn his carriage, they were cruſhed to pieces. The poor lady's underſtanding could not ſurvive ſo irreparable a loſs; and her relations, to ſoothe her paſſion, had provided thoſe Chelſea urns with which ſhe has decorated her chamber, and which ſhe believes to be the true Nanquin.

Yonder miſerable youth, being engaged in a hot contention at a faſhionable brothel about a celebrated courtezan, killed a ſea officer with whoſe face he was not acquainted; but who proved upon inquiry to be his own brother, who had been ten years abſent in the Indies.

Look attentively into the next cell; you will there diſcover a lady of great worth and fine accompliſhments, whoſe father condemned her to the arms of a right honourable debauchee, when he knew ſhe had fixed her affections irrevocably on another, who poſ-

ſeſſed

ſeſſed an unincumbered eſtate, but wanted the ornament of a title. She ſubmitted to the orders of a ſtern father with patience, obedience, and a breaking heart. Her huſband treated her with that contempt which he thought due to a citizen's daughter; and beſides communicated to her an infamous diſtemper, which her natural modeſty forbad her to diſcover in time; and the violent medicines which were afterwards adminiſtered to her by an unſkilful ſurgeon, threw her into a delirious fever, from which ſhe could never be recovered.

Here the Dean pauſed; and looking upon me with great earneſtneſs, and graſping my hand cloſely, ſpoke with an emphaſis that awaked me; "Think me not "ſo inſenſible a monſter, as to deride the lamentable "lot of the wretches we have now ſurveyed. If we "laugh at the follies, let us at the ſame time pity the "manifold miſeries of man."

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

SOPHRON.

No. CX.

No. CX. Saturday, November 24, 1753.

Mens immota manet, lachrymæ volvuntur inanes.

VIRG.

Sighs, groans, and tears proclaim his inward pains;
But the firm purpoſe of his heart remains.

DRYDEN.

PITY has been generally conſidered as the paſſion of gentle, benevolent, and virtuous minds; although it is acknowledged to produce only ſuch a participation of the calamity of others, as upon the whole is pleaſing to ourſelves.

As a tender participation of foreign diſtreſs, it has been urged to prove, that man is endowed with ſocial affections, which, however forcible, are wholly diſintereſted; and as a pleaſing ſenſation, it has been deemed an example of unmixed ſelfiſhneſs and malignity. It has been reſolved into that power of imagination, by which we apply the misfortunes of others to ourſelves: we have been ſaid to pity no longer than we fancy ourſelves to ſuffer, and to be pleaſed only by reflecting that our ſufferings are not real; thus indulging a dream of diſtreſs, from which we can awake when-

ever we pleaſe, to exult in our ſecurity, and enjoy the compariſon of the fiction with truth.

I ſhall not perplex my readers with the ſubtilties of a debate, in which human nature has, with equal zeal and plauſibility, been exalted and degraded. It is ſufficient for my purpoſe to remark, that Pity is generally underſtood to be that paſſion, which is excited by the ſufferings of perſons with whom we have no tender connection, and with whoſe welfare the ſtronger paſſions have not united our felicity; for no man would call the anguiſh of a mother, whoſe infant was torn from her breaſt and left to be devoured in a deſert, by the name of Pity; although the ſentiment of a ſtranger, who ſhould drop a ſilent tear at the relation, which yet might the next hour be forgotten, could not otherwiſe be juſtly denominated.

If Pity, therefore, is abſorbed in another paſſion, when our love of thoſe that ſuffer is ſtrong: Pity is rather an evidence of the weakneſs than the ſtrength of that general philanthropy, for which ſome have ſo eagerly contended, with which they have flattered the pride and veiled the vices of mankind, and which they have affirmed to be alone ſufficient to recommend them to the favour of Heaven, to atone for the indulgence of every appetite and the neglect of every duty.

If human benevolence was abſolutely pure and ſocial, it would not be neceſſary to relate the ravages of a peſtilence or a famine with minute and diſcriminating circumſtances, to rouze our ſenſibility: we ſhould certainly deplore irremediable calamity, and participate temporary diſtreſs, without any mixture of delight; that deceitful ſorrow, in which pleaſure is ſo well known to be predominant, that invention has been

buſied

buſied for ages in contriving tales of fictitious ſufferance for no other end than to excite it, would be changed into honeſt commiſeration, in which pain would be unmixed, and which, therefore, we ſhould wiſh to loſe.

Soon after the fatal battle of Fontenoy, a young gentleman, who came over with the officer that brought the expreſs, being expected at the houſe of a friend, a numerous company of gentlemen and ladies were aſſembled to hear an account of the action from an eye-witneſs.

The gentleman, as every man is flattered by commanding attention, was eaſily prevailed upon to gratify the company, as ſoon as they were ſeated, and the firſt ceremonies paſt. He deſcribed the march of many thouſands of their countrymen into a field, where batteries had been concealed on each ſide, which in a moment ſtrewed the ground with mangled limbs, and carcaſſes that almoſt floated in blood, and obſtructed the path of thoſe who followed to the ſlaughter. He related, how often the decreaſing multitude returned to the mouth of the cannon; how ſuddenly they were rallied, and how ſuddenly broken; he repeated the liſt of officers who had fallen undiſtinguiſhed in the carnage, men whoſe eminence rendered their names univerſally known, their influence extenſive, and their attachments numerous; and he hinted the fatal effects which this defeat might produce to the nation, by turning the ſucceſs of the war againſt us. But the company, however amuſed by the relation, appeared not to be affected by the event: they were ſtill attentive to every trifling punctilio of ceremony, uſual among well-bred perſons; they bowed with a graceful

ſimper to a lady who ſneezed, mutually preſented each other with ſnuff, ſhook their heads, and changed their poſture at proper intervals, aſked ſome queſtions which tended to produce a more minute detail of ſuch circumſtances of horror as had been lightly touched; and having at laſt remarked that the Roman patriot regretted the brave could die but once, the converſation ſoon became general, and a motion was made to divide into parties at whiſt. But juſt as they were about to comply, the gentleman again engaged their attention. I forgot, ſaid he, to relate one particular, which, however, deſerves to be remembered. The captain of a company, whoſe name I cannot now recollect, had, juſt before his corps was ordered to embark, married a young lady to whom he had been long tenderly attached, and who, contrary to the advice of all her friends, and the expoſtulations, perſuaſion, and intreaty of her huſband, inſiſted to go abroad with him, and ſhare his fortune at all events. If he ſhould be wounded, ſhe ſaid that ſhe might haſten his recovery, and alleviate his pain, by ſuch attendance as ſtrangers cannot be hired to pay; if he ſhould be taken priſoner, ſhe might, perhaps, be permitted to ſhorten the tedious hours of captivity, which ſolitude would protract; and if he ſhould die, that it would be better for her to know it with certainty and ſpeed, than to wait at a diſtance with anxiety and ſuſpenſe, tormented by doubtful and contradictory reports, and at laſt believing it poſſible, that if ſhe had been preſent, her aſſiduity and tenderneſs might have preſerved his life. The captain, though he was not convinced by her reaſoning, was yet overcome by the importunate eloquence of her

her love; he conſented to her requeſt, and they embarked together.

The head-quarters of the Duke of Cumberland were at Bruſſoel, from whence they removed the evening before the battle to Monbray, a village within muſquet-ſhot of the enemy's lines, where the captain, who commanded in the left wing, was encamped.

Their parting in the morning was ſhort. She looked after him, till he could no longer be diſtinguiſhed from others; and as ſoon as the firing began, ſhe went back pale and trembling, and ſate down expecting the event in an agony of impatience, anxiety, and terror. She ſoon learned from ſtragglers and fugitives, that the ſlaughter was dreadful, and the victory hopeleſs. She did not, however, yet deſpair; ſhe hoped, that the captain might return among the few that ſhould remain: but ſoon after the retreat, this hope was cut off, and ſhe was informed that he fell in the firſt charge, and was left among the dead. She was reſtrained by thoſe about her from ruſhing in the frenzy of deſperation to the field of battle, of which the enemy was ſtill poſſeſſed: but the tumult of her mind having abated, and her grief become more calm during the night, ſhe ordered the ſervant to attend her at break of day; and as leave had been given to bury the dead, ſhe went herſelf to ſeek the remains of her huſband, that ſhe might honour them with the laſt rites, and pour the tears of conjugal affection upon his grave. They wandered about among the dying and the dead, gazing on every diſtorted countenance, and looking round, with irreſolution and amazement, on a ſcene, which thoſe who ſtripped had left tenfold more a ſight of horror than thoſe who had ſlain. From this ſight ſhe was at

laſt turning with confuſion and deſpair; but was ſtopped by the cries of a favourite ſpaniel, who had followed her without being perceived. He was ſtanding at ſome diſtance in the field; and the moment ſhe ſaw him, ſhe conceived the ſtrongeſt aſſurance that he had found his maſter. She haſted inſtantly to the place, without regarding any other object; and ſtooping over the corpſe by which he ſtood, ſhe found it ſo diſfigured with wounds and beſmeared with blood, that the features were not to be known: but as ſhe was weeping in the anguiſh of ſuſpenſe, ſhe diſcovered hanging on the wriſt the remains of a ruffle, round which there was a ſlight border of her own work. Thus ſuddenly to have diſcovered, and in ſuch dreadful circumſtances, that which ſhe had ſought, quite overwhelmed her, and ſhe ſunk down on the body. By the aſſiſtance of the ſervant ſhe was recovered to ſenſibility, but not to reaſon; ſhe was ſeized at once with convulſions and madneſs; and a few hours after ſhe was carried back to the village, ſhe expired.

Thoſe who had heard the fate of whole battalions without pity, and the loſs of a battle, by which their country would probably ſuffer irreparable damage, without concern, liſtened to a tale of private diſtreſs with uninterrupted attention. All regard to each other was for a while ſuſpended; tears by degrees overflowed every eye, and every boſom became ſuſceptible of Pity: but the whole circle pauſed with evident regret, when the narrative was at an end; and would have been glad, that ſuch another could have been told to continue their entertainment. Such was the benevolence of Pity! But a lady who had taken the opportunity of a very ſlight acquaintance to ſatisfy her curioſity,

curioſity, was touched with much deeper diſtreſs; and fainting in the ſtruggle to conceal the emotions of her mind, fell back in her chair: an accident which was not ſooner diſcovered, becauſe every eye had been fixed upon the ſpeaker, and all attention monopolized by the ſtory. Every one, however, was ready to afford her aſſiſtance; and it was ſoon diſcovered, that ſhe was mother to the lady whoſe diſtreſs had afforded ſo much virtuous pleaſure to the company. It was not poſſible to tell her another ſtory, which would revive the ſame ſenſations; and if it had, the world could not have bribed her to have heard it. Her affection to the ſufferer was too ſtrong to permit her, on this occaſion, to enjoy the luxury of Pity, and applaud her benevolence for ſenſations which ſhewed its defects. It would, indeed, be happy for us, if we were to exiſt only in this ſtate of imperfection, that a greater ſhare of ſenſibility is not allowed us; but if the mole, in the kindneſs of unerring Wiſdom, is permitted ſcarce to diſtinguiſh light from darkneſs, the mole ſhould not, ſurely, be praiſed for the perſpicacity of its ſight.

Let us diſtinguiſh that malignity, which others confound with Benevolence, and applaud as Virtue; let that imperfection of nature, which is adapted to an imperfect ſtate, teach us humility; and fix our dependence upon Him, who has promiſed to "create in "us a new heart and a right ſpirit;" and to receive us to that place, where our love of others, however ardent, can only increaſe our felicity; becauſe in that place there will be no object, but ſuch as perfect Benevolence can contemplate with delight.

No. CXI. Tuesday, November 27. 1753.

——— *Quæ non fecimus ipsi,*
Vix ea nostra voco. OVID.

The deeds of long descended ancestors
Are but by grace of imputation ours.

DRYDEN.

THE evils inseparably annexed to the present condition of man, are so numerous and afflictive, that it has been, from age to age, the task of some to bewail, and of others to solace them; and he, therefore, will be in danger of seeing a common enemy, who shall attempt to depreciate the few pleasures and felicities which nature has allowed us.

Yet I will confess, that I have sometimes employed my thoughts in examining the pretensions that are made to happiness, by the splendid and envied condition of life; and have not thought the hour unprofitably spent, when I have detected the imposture of counterfeit advantages, and found disquiet lurking under false appearances of gaiety and greatness.

It is asserted by a tragic poet, that "est miser nemo "nisi comparatus," "no man is miserable, but as he "is compared with others happier than himself."

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This poſition is not ſtrictly and philoſophically true: He might have ſaid, with rigorous propriety, that no man is happy but as he is compared with the miſerable; for ſuch is the ſtate of this world, that we find in it abſolute miſery, but happineſs only comparative; we may incur as much pain as we can poſſibly endure, though we can never obtain as much happineſs as we might poſſibly enjoy.

Yet it is certain likewiſe, that many of our miſeries are merely comparative: we are often made unhappy, not by the preſence of any real evil, but by the abſence of ſome fictitious good; of ſomething which is not required by any real want of nature, which has not in itſelf any power of gratification, and which neither reaſon nor fancy would have prompted us to wiſh, did we not ſee it in the poſſeſſion of others.

For a mind diſeaſed with vain longings after unattainable advantages, no medicine can be preſcribed, but an impartial inquiry into the real worth of that which is ſo ardently deſired. It is well known, how much the mind, as well as the eye, is deceived by diſtance; and, perhaps, it will be found, that of many imagined bleſſings, it may be doubted, whether he that wants or poſſeſſes them has more reaſon to be ſatisfied with his lot.

The dignity of high birth and long extraction, no man, to whom nature has denied it, can confer upon himſelf; and, therefore, it deſerves to be conſidered, whether the want of that which can never be gained, may not eaſily be endured. It is true, that if we conſider the triumph and delight with which moſt of thoſe recount their anceſtors who have anceſtors to recount, and the artifices by which ſome who have riſen to un-

expected fortune endeavoured to inſert themſelves into an honourable ſtem, we ſhall be inclined to fancy that wiſdom or virtue may be had by inheritance, or that all the excellencies of a line of progenitors are accumulated on their deſcendant. Reaſon, indeed, will ſoon inform us, that our eſtimation of birth is arbitrary and capricious, and that dead anceſtors can have no influence but upon imagination: let it then be examined, whether one dream may not operate in the place of another; whether he that owes nothing to fore-fathers, may not receive equal pleaſure from the conſciouſneſs of owing all to himſelf; whether he may not, with a little meditation, find it more honourable to found than to continue a family, and to gain dignity than tranſmit it; whether, if he receives no dignity from the virtues of his family, he does not likewiſe eſcape the danger of being diſgraced by their crimes; and whether he that brings a new name into the world, has not the convenience of playing the game of life without a ſtake, an opportunity of winning much though he has nothing to loſe.

There is another opinion concerning happineſs, which approaches much more nearly to univerſality, but which may, perhaps, with equal reaſon be diſputed. The pretenſions to anceſtral honours, many of the ſons of earth eaſily ſee to be ill-grounded; but all agree to celebrate the advantage of hereditary riches, and to conſider thoſe as the minions of fortune, who are wealthy from their cradles, whoſe eſtate is "res non parta "labore ſed relicta;" "the acquiſition of another, "not of themſelves;" and whom a father's induſtry has diſpenſed from a laborious attention to arts or commence,

commerce, and left at liberty to diſpoſe of life as fancy ſhall direct them.

If every man were wiſe and virtuous, capable to diſcern the beſt uſe of time, and reſolute to practiſe it; it might be granted, I think, without heſitation, that total liberty would be a bleſſing, and that it would be deſirable to be left at large to the exerciſe of religious and ſocial duties, without the interruption of importunate avocations.

But ſince felicity is relative, and that which is the means of happineſs to one man may be to another the cauſe of miſery, we are to conſider, what ſtate is beſt adapted to human nature in its preſent degeneracy and frailty. And, ſurely, to far the greater number it is highly expedient, that they ſhould by ſome ſettled ſcheme of duties be reſcued from the tyranny of caprice; that they ſhould be driven on by neceſſity through the paths of life with their attention confined to a ſtated taſk, that they may be leſs at leiſure to deviate into miſchief at the call of folly.

When we obſerve the lives of thoſe whom an ample inheritance has let looſe to their own direction, what do we diſcover that can excite our envy? Their time ſeems not to paſs with much applauſe from others, or ſatisfaction to themſelves: many ſquander their exuberance of fortune in luxury and debauchery, and have no other uſe of money than to inflame their paſſions, and riot in a wider range of licentiouſneſs; others, leſs criminal indeed, but, ſurely, not much to be praiſed, lie down to ſleep, and riſe up to trifle, are employed every morning in finding expedients to rid themſelves of the day, chaſe pleaſure through all the places of public reſort, fly from London to Bath, and from Bath to London, without any other reaſon for changing

place, but that they go in queſt of company as idle and as vagrant as themſelves, always endeavouring to raiſe ſome new deſire, that they may have ſomething to purſue, to rekindle ſome hope which they know will be diſappointed, changing one amuſement for another which a few months will make equally inſipid, or ſinking into languor and diſeaſe for want of ſomething to actuate their bodies or exhilarate their minds.

Whoever has frequented thoſe places, where idlers aſſemble to eſcape from ſolitude, knows that this is generally the ſtate of the wealthy; and from this ſtate it is no great hardſhip to be debarred. No man can be happy in total idleneſs: he that ſhould be condemned to lie torpid and motionleſs, "would fly for recrea-"tion," ſays South, "to the mines and the gallies;" and it is well, when nature or fortune find employment for thoſe, who would not have known how to procure it for themſelves.

He, whoſe mind is engaged by the acquiſition or improvement of a fortune, not only eſcapes the inſipidity of indifference, and the tedioufneſs of inactivity, but gains enjoyments wholly unknown to thoſe, who live lazily on the toil of others; for life affords no higher pleaſure, than that of ſurmounting difficulties, paſſing from one ſtep of ſucceſs to another, forming new wiſhes, and ſeeing them gratified. He that labours in any great or laudable undertaking, has his fatigues firſt ſupported by hope, and afterwards rewarded by joy; he is always moving to a certain end, and when he has attained it, an end more diſtant invites him to a new purſuit.

It does not, indeed, always happen, that diligence is fortunate; the wiſeſt ſchemes are broken by unexpected

pected accidents: the most constant perseverance sometimes toils through life without a recompence: but labour, though unsuccessful, is more eligible than idleness; he that prosecutes a lawful purpose by lawful means, acts always with the approbation of his own reason; he is animated through the course of his endeavours by an expectation which, though not certain, he knows to be just; and is at last comforted in his disappointment, by the consciousness that he has not failed by his own fault.

That kind of life is most happy, which affords us most opportunities of gaining our own esteem; and what can any man infer in his own favour from a condition to which, however prosperous, he contributed nothing, and which the vilest and weakest of the species would have obtained by the same right, had he happened to be the son of the same father.

To strive with difficulties, and to conquer them, is the highest human felicity; the next, is to strive, and deserve to conquer: but he whose life has passed without a contest, and who can boast neither success nor merit, can survey himself only as a useless filler of existence; and if he is content with his own character, must owe his satisfaction to insensibility.

Thus it appears that the satirist advised rightly, when he directed us to resign ourselves to the hands of Heaven, and to leave to superior powers the determination of our lot:

Permittes ipsis expendere Numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris:
Carior est illis homo quam sibi.

Intrust

Intruſt thy fortune to the pow'rs above:
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wiſdom ſees thee want.
In goodneſs as in greatneſs they excel:
Ah! that we lov'd ourſelves but half ſo well.

DRYDEN.

What ſtate of life admits moſt happineſs, is uncertain; but that uncertainty ought to repreſs the petulance of compariſon, and ſilence the murmurs of diſcontent.

T

No. CXII. Saturday, December 1, 1753.

——Has pœnas garrula lingua dedit. OVID.

Such was the fate of vain loquacity.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR,

To be courteous to all, but familiar with few, is a maxim which I once deſpiſed, as originally proceeding from a mean and contracted mind, the frigid caution of weakneſs and timidity. A tame and indiſcriminate civility, I imputed to a dread of the contempt or the petulance

petulance of others, to fears from which the wit and the gentleman are exempted by a conſciouſneſs of their own dignity, by their power to repreſs inſolence and ſilence ridicule; and a general ſhyneſs and reſerve I conſidered as the reproach of our country, as the effect of an illiberal education, by which neither a polite addreſs, an eaſy confidence, or a general acquaintance with public life, is to be acquired. This opinion, which continued to flatter the levity and pride that produced it, was ſtrengthened by the example of thoſe whoſe manner in the diffidence of youth I wiſhed to imitate, who entered a mixed company with an air of ſerene familiarity, accoſted every man like an old acquaintance, and thought only of making ſport for the reſt of any with whom their caprice ſhould happen to be offended, without regard to their age, character, or condition.

But I now wiſh, that I had regulated my conduct by the maxim which I deſpiſed; for I ſhould then have eſcaped a misfortune which I can never retrieve; and the ſenſe of which I am now endeavouring to ſuſpend, by relating it to you as a leſſon to others, and conſidering my loſs of happineſs as an acquiſition of wiſdom.

While I was in France with a travelling tutor, I received a letter which acquainted me, that my father, who had been long declining, was dead; and that it was neceſſary I ſhould immediately return to England to take poſſeſſion of his eſtate, which was not inconſiderable, though there were mortgages upon it to near half its value.

When I arrived, I found a letter which the old gentleman had written and directed to me with his

own

own hand. It contained ſome general rules for my conduct, and ſome animadverſions upon his own: he took notice of the incumbrance under which he left me the paternal inheritance, which had deſcended through many generations, and expreſſed the moſt earneſt deſire, that it might yet be tranſmitted entire to poſterity: with this view, he ſaid, he had negociated a marriage between me and the only daughter of his old friend, Sir George Homeſtead of the North, an amiable young lady, whoſe alliance would be an honour to my family, and whoſe fortune would much more than redeem my eſtate.

He had given the knight a faithful account of his affairs, who, after having taken ſome time to conſider the propoſal and conſult his friends, had conſented to the match, upon condition that his daughter and I ſhould be agreeable to each other, and my behaviour ſhould confirm the character which had been given of me. My father added, that he hoped to have lived till this alliance had taken place; but as Providence had otherwiſe determined, he intreated, as his laſt requeſt, that as ſoon as my affairs ſhould be ſettled, and decency would permit, I would make Sir George a viſit, and neglect nothing to accompliſh his purpoſe.

I was touched with the zeal and tenderneſs of parental affection, which was then directing me to happineſs, after the heart that felt it had ceaſed to beat, and the hand that expreſſed it was mouldering in the duſt. I had alſo ſeen the lady, not indeed ſince we were children; but I remember that her perſon was agreeable, and her temper ſweet: I did not, therefore, heſitate a moment, whether my father's injunction

ſhould

ſhould be obeyed. I proceeded to ſettle his affairs; I took an account of his debts and credits, viſited the tenants, recovered my uſual gaiety, and at the end of about nine months ſet out for Sir George's ſeat in the North; having before opened an epiſtolary correſpondence, and expreſſed my impatience to poſſeſs the happineſs which my father had ſo kindly ſecured.

I was better pleaſed to be well mounted, than to loll in a chariot, or be jumbled in a poſt-chaiſe; and I knew that Sir George was an old ſportſman, a plain hearty blade, who would like me better in a pair of buckſkin breeches on the back of a good hunter, than in a trimmed ſuit and a gaudy equipage; I, therefore, ſet out on horſe-back with only one ſervant, and reached Stilton the firſt night.

In the morning, as I was mounting, a gentleman, who had juſt got on horſeback before me, ordered his ſervant to make ſome inquiry about the road, which I happened to overhear, and told him with great familiarity, that I was going the ſame way, and if he pleaſed we would travel together: to this he conſented with as much frankneſs, and as little ceremony; and I ſet forward, greatly delighted that chance had afforded me a companion.

We immediately entered into converſation, and I ſoon found that he had been abroad: we extolled the roads and the policy of France, the cities, the palaces, and the villas; entered into a critical examination of the moſt celebrated ſeats in England, the peculiarities of the building and ſituation, croſs ways, market towns, the impoſition of inn-keepers, and the ſports of the field; topics by which we mutually recommended ourſelves to each other, as we had both opportunities

to

to diſcover equal knowledge, and to diſplay truth with ſuch evidence as prevented diverſity of opinions.

After we had rode about two hours, we overtook another gentleman, whom we accoſted with the ſame familiarity that we had uſed to each other; we aſked him how far he was going, and which way, at what rate he travelled, where he put up, and many other queſtions of the ſame kind. The gentleman, who appeared to be near fifty, received our addreſs with great coolneſs, returned ſhort and indirect anſwers to our inquiries, and, often looking with great attention on us both, ſometimes put forward that he might get before us, and ſometimes checked his horſe that he might remain behind. But we were reſolved to diſappoint him; and, finding that his reſerve increaſed, and he was viſibly diſpleaſed, we winked at each other, and determined the old put ſhould afford us ſome ſport. After we had rode together upon very ill terms more than half an hour, my companion with an air of ceremonious gravity aſked him, if he knew any houſe upon the road where he might be accommodated with a wench. The gentleman, who was, I believe, afraid of giving us a pretence to quarrel, did not reſent this inſult any otherwiſe than by making no reply. I then began to talk to my companion as if we had been old acquaintance, reminding him that the gentleman extremely reſembled a perſon, from whom we had taken a girl that he was carrying to the bagnio, and, indeed, that his preſent reſerve made me ſuſpect him to be the ſame; but that as we were willing to aſk his pardon, we hoped it would be forgot, and that we ſhould ſtill have the pleaſure of dining together at the next inn.

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The gentleman was ſtill ſilent; but as his perplexity and reſentment viſibly increaſed, he proportionably increaſed our entertainment, which did not, however, laſt long, for he ſuddenly turned down a lane; upon which we ſet up a horſe laugh, that continued till he was out of hearing, and then purſuing our journey, we talked of the adventure, which afforded us converſation and merriment for the reſt of the day.

The next morning we parted, and in the evening I arrived at Homeſtead Hall. The old knight received me with great affection, and immediately introduced me to his daughter, whom I now thought the fineſt woman I had ever ſeen. I could eaſily diſcover, that I was not welcome to her merely upon her father's recommendation; and I enjoyed by anticipation the felicity which I conſidered as within my graſp. But the pleaſing ſcene, in which I had ſuffered my imagination to wander, ſuddenly diſappeared as by the power of enchantment; without any viſible motive, the behaviour of the whole family was changed, my aſſiduities to the lady were repreſſed, ſhe was never to be found alone, the knight treated me with a cold civility, I was no longer a party in their viſits, nor was I willingly attended even by the ſervants. I made many attempts to diſcover the cauſe of this misfortune, but without ſucceſs; and one morning, when I had drawn Sir George into the garden by himſelf, and was about to urge him upon the ſubject, he prevented me by ſaying, that his promiſe to my father, for whom he had the higheſt regard, as I well knew, was conditional; that he had always reſolved to leave his daughter a free choice; and that ſhe had requeſted him to acquaint me, that her affections were otherwiſe engaged,

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and to intreat that I would, therefore, diſcontinue my addreſſes. My ſurpriſe and concern at this declaration, were ſuch as left me no power to reply; and I ſaw Sir George turn from me and go into the houſe, without making any attempt to ſtop him, or to obtain a further explanation. Afterwards, indeed, I frequently expoſtulated, intreated, and complained; but, perceiving that all was ineffectual, I took my leave, and determined that I would ſtill ſolicit by letter; for the lady had taken ſuch poſſeſſion of my heart, that I would joyfully have married her, though I had been ſure that her father would immediately have left all his fortune to a ſtranger.

I meditated on my epiſtolary project all the way to London, and before I had been three days in town I wrote a long letter to Sir George, in which I conjured him in the ſtrongeſt terms, to account for the change in his behaviour; and inſiſted, that, on this occaſion, to conceal the truth, was in the higheſt degree diſhonourable to himſelf, and injurous to me.

To this letter, after about ten days, I received the following anſwer:

SIR,

"IT is with great reluctance that I reveal the motives of my conduct, becauſe they are much to your diſadvantage. The incloſed is a letter which I received from a worthy gentleman in this county, and contains a full anſwer to your inquiries, which I had rather you ſhould receive in any hand than in mine.

"I am your humble ſervant,

"GEO. HOMESTEAD."

I immediately opened the paper incloſed, in which, with the utmoſt impatience, I read as follows:

"SIR,

"I saw a perſon with your family yeſterday at the "races, to whom, as I was ſoon after informed, you "intended to give your daughter. Upon this occa- "ſion, it is my indiſpenſable duty to acquaint you, "that if his character is to be determined by his com- "pany, he will inevitably entail diſeaſes and beggary "upon his poſterity, whatever be the merit of his "wife, or the affluence of his fortune. He overtook "me on the road from London a few weeks ago, in "company with a wretch, who by their diſcourſe ap- "peared to be his old and familiar acquaintance, and "whom I well remember to have been brought before "my friend Juſtice Worthy, when I was accidentally "at his houſe, as the keeper of a brothel in Covent "Garden. He has ſince won a conſiderable ſum with "falſe dice at the maſquerade, for which he was "obliged to leave the kingdom, and is ſtill liable to a "proſecution. Be aſſured that I have perfect know- "ledge of both; for ſome incidents, which it is not "neceſſary to mention, kept me near them ſo long on "the road, that it is impoſſible I ſhould be miſtaken.

I am, SIR,

Your's, &c.

JAMES TRUEMAN.

The moment I had read this letter, the riddle was ſolved. I knew Mr. Trueman to be the gentleman, whom I had, concurred with a ſtranger, picked up by accident, to inſult without provocation on the road. I was in a moment covered with confuſion; and though I was alone, could not help hiding my face with my hands. I abhorred my folly, which appeared yet more enormous every time it was reviewed.

I courted the ſociety of a ſtranger, and a ſtranger I perſecuted with inſult: thus I aſſociated with infamy, and thus my aſſociate became known. I hoped, however, to convince Sir George, that I had no knowledge of the wretch whoſe iufamy I had ſhared, except that which I acquired from the letter of his friend. But before I had taken proper meaſures for my juſtification, I had the mortification to hear, that the lady was married to a neighbouring gentleman, who had long made his addreſſes, and whom Sir George had before rejected in the ardour of his friendſhip for my father.

How narrow, Mr. Adventurer, is the path of rectitude, and how much may be loſt by the ſlighteſt deviation!

I am your humble ſervant,

ABULUS.

No. CXIII. Tueſday, December 4. 1753.

Ad humum mœrore gravi deducit et angit. HOR.

Wrings the ſad ſoul, and bends it down to earth.
FRANCIS.

ONE of the moſt remarkable differences betwixt ancient and modern tragedy, ariſes from the prevailing cuſtom of deſcribing only thoſe diſtreſſes that are occaſioned by the paſſion of love; a paſſion which, from the univerſality of its dominion, may doubtleſs juſtly claim a large ſhare in repreſentations of human life; but which, by totally engroſſing the theatre, had contributed to degrade that noble ſchool of virtue into an academy of effeminacy.

When Racine perſuaded the celebrated Arnauld to read his Phædra, "Why," ſaid that ſevere critic to his friend, "have you falſified the manners of Hippo-"litus, and repreſented him in love?" "Alas!" replied the poet, "without that circumſtance, how "would the ladies and the beaux have received my "piece?" And it may well be imagined, that to gratify ſo conſiderable and important a part of his audience was the powerful motive that induced Corneille

to

to enervate even the matchleſs and affecting ſtory of Oedipus, by the frigid and impertinent epiſode of Theſeus's paſſion for Dirce.

Shakeſpeare has ſhewn us, by his Hamlet, Macbeth, and Cæſar, and above all by his Lear, that very intereſting tragedies may be written, that are not founded on gallantry and love: and that Boileau was miſtaken, when he affirmed,

——de l'amour la ſenſible peinture,
Eſt pour aller au cœur, la route la plus ſûre,

Thoſe tender ſcenes that pictur'd love impart,
Inſure ſucceſs, and beſt engage the heart.

The diſtreſſes in this tragedy are of a very uncommon nature, and are not touched upon by any other dramatic author. They are occaſioned by a raſh reſolution of an aged monarch of ſtrong paſſions and quick ſenſibility, to reſign his crown and to divide his kingdom amongſt his three daughters; the youngeſt of whom, who was his favourite, not anſwering his ſanguine expectations in expreſſions of affection to him, he for ever baniſhes, and endows her ſiſters with her allotted ſhare. Their unnatural ingratitude, the intolerable affronts, indignities, and cruelties he ſuffers from them, and the remorſe he feels from his imprudent reſignation of his power, at firſt inflame him with the moſt violent rage, and by degrees drive him to madneſs and death. This is the outline of the fable.

I ſhall confine myſelf at preſent to conſider ſingly the judgment and art of the poet, in deſcribing the origin and progreſs of the diſtraction of Lear; in which, I think, he has ſucceeded better than any other writer, even

even than Euripides himſelf, whom Longinus ſo highly commends for his repreſentation of the madneſs of Oreſtes.

It is well contrived, that the firſt affront that is offered Lear, ſhould be a propoſal from Gonerill, his eldeſt daughter, to leſſen the number of his knights, which muſt needs affect and irritate a perſon ſo jealous of his rank and the reſpect due to it. He is at firſt aſtoniſhed at the complicated impudence and ingratitude of this deſign; but quickly kindles into rage, and reſolves to depart inſtantly:

——Darkneſs and devils!——
Saddle my horſes, call my train together—
Degen'rate baſtard! I'll not trouble thee.—

This is followed by a ſevere reflection upon his own folly for reſigning his crown! and a ſolemn invocation to Nature, to heap the moſt horrible curſes on the head of Gonerill, that her own offspring may prove equally cruel and unnatural;

——that ſhe may feel,
How ſharper than a ſerpent's tooth it is,
To have a thankleſs child!——

When Albany demands the cauſe of this paſſion, Lear anſwers, "I'll tell thee!" but immediately cries out to Gonerill,

——Life and death! I am aſhamed,
That thou haſt power to ſhake my manhood thus.
——Blaſts and fogs upon thee!
Th' untented woundings of a father's curſe
Pierce every ſenſe about thee!

He ſtops a little and reflects:

Ha! is it come to this?
Let it be ſo! I have another daughter,
Who, I am ſure, is kind and comfortable.
When ſhe ſhall hear this of thee, with her nails
She'll flea thy wolfiſh viſage——

He was, however, miſtaken; for the firſt object he encounters in the caſtle of the Earl of Glouceſter, whither he fled to meet his other daughter, was his ſervant in the ſtocks: from whence he may eaſily conjecture what reception he is to meet with:

——Death on my ſtate! Wherefore
Should he ſit here?

He adds immediately afterwards,

O me, my heart! my riſing heart!—but down.

By which ſingle line the inexpreſſible anguiſh of his mind, and the dreadful conflict of oppoſite paſſions with which it is agitated, are more forcibly expreſſed, than by the long and laboured ſpeech, enumerating the cauſes of his anguiſh, that Rowe and other modern tragic writers would certainly have put into his mouth. But Nature, Sophocles, and Shakeſpeare, repreſent the feelings of the heart in a different manner: by a broken hint, a ſhort exclamation, a word, or a look:

They mingle not, 'mid deep felt ſighs and groans,
Deſcriptions gay, or quaint compariſons,
No flowery far-fetch'd thoughts their ſcenes admit;
Ill ſuits conceit with paſſion, woe with wit.

Here

Here paſſion prompts each ſhort, expreſſive ſpeech;
Or ſilence paints what words can never reach.

- J. W.

When Jocaſta, in Sophocles, has diſcovered that Oedipus was the murderer of her huſband, ſhe immediately leaves the ſtage; but in Corneille and Dryden ſhe continues on it during a whole ſcene, to bewail her deſtiny in ſet ſpeeches. I ſhould be guilty of inſenſibility and injuſtice, if I did not take this occaſion to acknowledge, that I have been more moved and delighted, by hearing this ſingle line ſpoken by the only actor of the age, who underſtands and reliſhes theſe little touches of nature, and therefore the only one qualified to perſonate this moſt difficult character of Lear, than by the moſt pompous declaimer of the moſt pompous ſpeeches in Cato or Tamerlane.

In the next ſcene, the old king appears in a very diſtreſsful ſituation. He informs Regan, whom he believes to be ſtill actuated by filial tenderneſs, of the cruelties he had ſuffered from her ſiſter Gonerill, in very pathetic terms:

——Beloved Regan,
Thy ſiſter's naught—O Regan! ſhe hath tied
Sharp tooth'd unkindneſs, like a vulture, here.
I ſcarce can ſpeak to thee—thou'lt not believe,
With how deprav'd a quality—O Regan——

It is a ſtroke of wonderful art in the poet to repreſent him incapable of ſpecifying the particular ill uſage he has received, and breaking off thus abruptly, as if his voice was choaked by tenderneſs and reſentment.

When Regan counſels him to aſk her ſiſter forgiveneſs, he falls on his knees, with a very ſtriking kind of irony, and aſks her how ſuch ſupplicating language as this becometh him:

Dear daughter, I confeſs that I am old;
Age is unneceſſary: on my knees I beg,
That you'll vouchſafe me raiment, bed and food.

But being again exhorted to ſue for reconciliation, the advice wounds him to the quick, and forces him into execrations againſt Gonerill, which, though they chill the ſoul with horror, are yet well ſuited to the impetuoſity of his temper:

She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me; ſtruck me with her tongue,
Moſt ſerpent-like, upon the very heart——
All the ſtor'd vengeances of heaven fall
On her ungrateful top! Strike her young bones,
Ye taking airs, with lameneſs!——
Ye nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her ſcornful eyes?——

The wretched king, little imagining that he is to be outcaſt from Regan alſo, adds very movingly;

——'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleaſures, to cut off my train,
To bandy haſty words, to ſcant my ſizes.—
——Thou better know'ſt
The offices of nature, bond of childhood——
Thy half o' th' kingdom thou haſt not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd——

That

That the hopes he had conceived of tender uſage from Regan ſhould be deceived, heightens his diſtreſs to a great degree. Yet it is ſtill aggravated and increaſed, by the ſudden appearance of Gonerill; upon the unexpected ſight of whom he exclaims,

——Who comes here? O heavens!
If you do love old men, if your ſweet ſway
Allow obedience, if yourſelves are old,
Make it your cauſe, ſend down and take my part!

This addreſs is ſurely pathetic beyond expreſſion; it is ſcarce enough to ſpeak of it in the cold terms of criticiſm. There follows a queſtion to Gonerill, that I have never read without tears:

Ar'ſt not aſham'd to look upon this beard?

This ſcene abounds with many noble turns of paſſion, or rather conflicts of very different paſſions. The inhuman daughters urge him in vain, by all the ſophiſtical and unfilial arguments they were miſtreſſes of, to diminiſh the number of his train. He anſwers them by only four poignant words:

I gave you all!

When Regan at laſt conſents to receive him, but without any attendants, for that he might be ſerved by her own domeſtics, he can no longer contain his diſappointment and rage. Firſt he appeals to the heavens, and points out to them a ſpectacle that is indeed inimitably affecting;

You ſee me here, ye Gods! a poor old man,
As full of grief as age, wretched in both:

If it be you that ſtir theſe daughters hearts
Againſt their father, fool me not ſo much
To bear it tamely!

Then ſuddenly he addreſſes Goneril and Regan
In the ſevereſt terms and with the bittereſt threats:

——No, you unnatural hags!
I will have ſuch revenges on you both—
That all the world ſhall—I will do ſuch things—
What they are yet, I know not—

Nothing occurs to his mind ſevere enough for them to ſuffer, or him to inflict. His paſſion riſes to a height that deprives him of articulation. He tells them that he will ſubdue his ſorrow, though almoſt irreſiſtible; and that they ſhall not triumph over his weakneſs:

——You think I'll weep!
No! I'll not weep; I have full cauſe of weeping;
But this heart ſhall break into a thouſand flaws,
Or e'er I'll weep!

He concludes,

O fool—I ſhall go mad!——

which is an artful anticipation, that judiciouſly prepares us for the dreadful event that is to follow in the ſucceeding acts.

No. CXIV. Saturday, Dec. 8. 1753.

Sperat infeſtis, metuit ſecundis,
Alteram ſortem bene præparatum
Pectus. HOR.

Whoe'er enjoys th' untroubled breaſt,
With Virtue's tranquil wiſdom bleſt;
With hope the gloomy hour can cheer,
And temper happineſs with fear. FRANCIS.

ALMET, the derviſe, who watched the ſacred lamp in the ſepulchre of the Prophet, as he one day roſe up from the devotions of the morning, which he had performed at the gate of the temple with his body turned towards the eaſt and his forehead on the earth, ſaw before him a man in ſplendid apparel attended by a long retinue, who gazed ſtedfaſtly at him with a look of mournful complacence, and ſeemed deſirous to ſpeak, but unwilling to offend.

The Derviſe, after a ſhort ſilence, advanced, and ſaluting him with the calm dignity which independence confers upon humility, requeſted that he would reveal his purpoſe.

" Almet," ſaid the ſtranger, " thou ſeeſt before thee " a man, whom the hand of proſperity has overwhelm- " ed with wretchedneſs. Whatever I once deſired as " the means of happineſs, I now poſſeſs: but I am not " yet happy, and therefore I deſpair. I regret the " lapſe of time, becauſe it glides away without enjoy- " ment; and as I expect nothing in the future but the " vanities of the paſt, I do not wiſh that the future " ſhould arrive. Yet I tremble leſt it ſhould be cut " off; and my heart ſinks when I anticipate the mo- " ment, in which eternity ſhall cloſe over the vacuity " of my life, like the ſea upon the path of a ſhip, and " leave no traces of my exiſtence more durable than " the furrow which remains after the waves have u- " nited. If in the treaſures of thy wiſdom there is any " precept to obtain felicity, vouchſafe it to me: for " this purpoſe am I come; a purpoſe which yet I fear- " ed to reveal, leſt like all the former it ſhould be " diſappointed." Almet liſtened, with looks of aſto- niſhment and pity, to this complaint of a being, in whom reaſon was known to be a pledge of immortality; but the ſerenity of his countenance ſoon returned; and, ſtretching out his hand towards Heaven, " Stranger," ſaid he, " the knowledge which I have received from " the Prophet, I will communicate to thee."

As I was ſitting one evening at the porch of the temple penſive and alone, mine eye wandered among the multitude that was ſcattered before me; and while I remarked the wearineſs and ſolicitude which was viſible in every countenance, I was ſuddenly ſtruck with a ſenſe of their condition. Wretched mortals, ſaid I, to what purpoſe are you buſy? if to produce happineſs, *by whom is it enjoyed?* Do the linens of Egypt, and

the

the ſilks of Perſia, beſtow felicity on thoſe who wear them, equal to the wretchedneſs of yonder ſlaves whom I ſee leading the camels that bring them? Is the fineneſs of the texture, or the ſplendor of the tints, regarded with delight by thoſe to whom cuſtom has rendered them familiar? or can the power of habit render others inſenſible of pain, who live only to traverſe the deſert; a ſcene of dreadful uniformity, where a barren level is bounded only by the horizon; where no change of proſpect, or variety of images, relieves the traveller from a ſenſe of toil and danger, of whirlwinds which in a moment may bury him in the ſand, and of thirſt, which the wealthy have given half their poſſeſſions to allay? Do thoſe on whom hereditary diamonds ſparkle with unregarded luſtre, gain from the poſſeſſion what is loſt by the wretch who ſeeks them in the mine; who lives excluded from the common bounties of nature; to whom even the viciſſitude of day and night is not known; who ſighs in perpetual darkneſs, and whoſe life is one mournful alternative of inſenſibility and labour? If thoſe are not happy who poſſeſs, in proportion as thoſe are wretched who beſtow, how vain a dream is the life of man! and if there is, indeed, ſuch difference in the value of exiſtence, how ſhall we acquit of partiality the hand by which this difference has been made?

While my thoughts thus multiplied, and my heart burned within me, I became ſenſible of a ſudden influence from above. The ſtreets and the crowds of Mecca diſappeared; I found myſelf ſitting on the declivity of a mountain, and perceived at my right hand an angel, whom I knew to be Azoran the miniſter of reproof. When I ſaw him, I was afraid. I caſt mine

eyes upon the ground, and was about to deprecate his anger, when he commanded me to be ſilent. "Almet," ſaid he, "thou haſt devoted thy life to meditation, that thy counſel might deliver ignorance from "the mazes of error, and deter preſumption from the "precipice of guilt; but the book of nature thou haſt "read without underſtanding; it is again open before "thee: look up, conſider it, and be wiſe."

I looked up, and beheld an incloſure, beautiful as the gardens of Paradiſe, but of a ſmall extent. Through the middle, there was a green walk; at the end, a wild deſert; and beyond, impenetrable darkneſs. The walk was ſhaded with trees of every kind, that were covered at once with bloſſoms and fruit; innumerable birds were ſinging in the branches; the graſs was intermingled with flowers, which impregnated the breeze with fragrance, and painted the path with beauty; on one ſide flowed a gentle tranſparent ſtream, which was juſt heard to murmur over the golden ſands that ſparkled at the bottom; and on the other were walks and bowers, fountains, grottoes, and caſcades, which diverſified the ſcene with endleſs variety, but did not conceal the bounds.

While I was gazing in a tranſport of delight and wonder on this enchanting ſpot, I perceived a man ſtealing along the walk with a thoughtful aud deliberate pace: his eyes were fixed upon the earth, and his arms croſſed on his boſom; he ſometimes ſtarted, as if a ſudden pang had ſeized him; his countenance expreſſed ſolicitude and terror; he looked round with a ſigh, and having gazed a moment on the deſert that lay before him, he ſeemed as if he wiſhed to ſtop, but was impelled forwards by ſome inviſible power; his features

features however ſoon ſettled again into a calm melancholy; his eye was again fixed on the ground; and he went on, as before, with apparent reluctance, but without emotion. I was ſtruck with this appearance; and turning haſtily to the Angel, was about to inquire what could produce ſuch infelicity in a being, ſurrounded with every object that could gratify every ſenſe; but he prevented my requeſt: "The book of nature," ſaid he, "is before thee; look up, conſider it, and be "wiſe." I looked, and beheld a valley between two mountains that were craggy and barren: on the path there was no verdure, and the mountains afforded no ſhade; the ſun burned in the zenith, and every ſpring was dried up; but the valley terminated in a country that was pleaſant and fertile, ſhaded with woods, and adorned with buildings. At a ſecond view, I diſcovered a man in this valley, meagre indeed and naked, but his countenance was cheerful, and his deportment active; he kept his eye fixed upon the country before him, and looked as if he would have run, but that he was reſtrained, as the other had been impelled, by ſome ſecret influence; ſometimes, indeed, I perceived a ſudden expreſſion of pain, and ſometimes he ſtopped ſhort as if his foot was pierced by the aſperities of the way; but the ſprightlineſs of his countenance inſtantly returned, and he preſſed forward without appearance of repining or complaint.

I turned again toward the Angel, impatient to inquire from what ſecret ſource happineſs was derived, in a ſituation ſo different from that in which it might have been expected: but he again prevented my requeſt: "Almet," ſaid he, "remember what thou haſt ſeen;

" and let this memorial be written upon the tablets of " thy heart. Remember, Almet, that the world in " which thou art placed, is but the road to another; " and that happineſs depends not upon the path, but " the end; the value of this period of thy exiſtence " is fixed by hope and fear. The wretch who wiſhed " to linger in the garden, who looked round upon its " limits with terror, was deſtitute of enjoyment, be- " cauſe he was deſtitute of hope, and was perpetually " tormented by the dread of loſing that which yet he " did not enjoy; the ſong of the birds had been re- " peated till it was not heard, and the flowers had ſo " often recurred that their beauty was not ſeen; the " river glided by unnoticed; and he feared to lift his " eye to the proſpect, leſt he ſhould behold the waſte " that circumſcribed it. But he that toiled through " the valley was happy, becauſe he looked forward " with hope. Thus, to the ſojourner upon earth, it is " of little moment, whether the path he treads be " ſtrewed with flowers or with thorns, if he perceives " himſelf to approach thoſe regions, in compariſon of " which the thorns and the flowers of this wilderneſs " loſe their diſtinction, and are both alike impotent to " give pleaſure or pain.

" What then has Eternal Wiſdom unequally diſtri- " buted? That which can make every ſtation happy, " and without which every ſtation muſt be wretched, " is acquired by Virtue, and Virtue is poſſible to all. " Remember, Almet, the viſion which thou haſt ſeen; " and let my words be written on the tablet of thy " heart, that thou may'ſt direct the wanderer to hap- " pineſs, and juſtify God to men."

While

While the voice of Azoran was yet ſounding in my ear, the proſpect vaniſhed from before me, and I found myſelf again ſitting at the porch of the temple. The ſun was gone down, the multitude was retired to reſt, and the ſolemn quiet of midnight concurred with the reſolution of my doubts to complete the tranquillity of my mind.

Such, my ſon, was the viſion which the Prophet vouchſafed me, not for my ſake only, but for thine. Thou haſt ſought felicity in temporal things; and, therefore, thou art diſappointed. Let not inſtruction be loſt upon thee, as the ſeal of Mahomet in the well of Aris; but go thy way, let thy flock clothe the naked, and thy table feed the hungry; deliver the poor from oppreſſion, and let thy converſation be above. Thus ſhalt thou "rejoice in Hope," and look forward to the end of life as the conſummation of thy felicity.

Almet, in whoſe breaſt devotion kindled as he ſpake, returned into the temple, and the ſtranger departed in peace.

No. CXV. Tueſday, December 11, 1753.

Scribimus indocti doctique. HOR.

All dare to write, who can or cannot read.

THEY who have attentively conſidered the hiſtory of mankind, know that every age has its peculiar character. At one time, no deſire is felt but for military honours; every ſummer affords battles and ſieges, and the world is filled with ravage, bloodſhed, and devaſtation: this ſanguinary fury at length ſubſides, and nations are divided into factions, by controverſies about points that will never be decided. Men then grow weary of debate and altercation, and apply themſelves to the arts of profit; trading companies are formed, manufactures improved, and navigation extended: and nothing is any longer thought on, but the increaſe and preſervation of property, the artifices of getting money, and the pleaſures of ſpending it.

The preſent age, if we conſider chiefly the ſtate of our own country, may be ſtyled with great propriety the Age of Authors; for, perhaps, there never was a time, in which men of all degrees of ability, of every kind of education, of every profeſſion and employment, were

were poſting with ardor ſo general to the preſs. The province of writing was formerly left to thoſe, who by ſtudy, or appearance of ſtudy, were ſuppoſed to have gained knowledge unattainable by the buſy part of mankind; but in theſe enlightened days, every man is qualified to inſtruct every other man; and he that beats the anvil, or guides the plough, not content with ſupplying corporal neceſſities, amuſes himſelf in the hours of leiſure with providing intellectual pleaſures for his countrymen.

It may be obſerved, that of this, as of other evils, complaints have been made by every generation: but though it may, perhaps, be true, that at all times more have been willing than have been able to write, yet there is no reaſon for believing, that the dogmatical legions of the preſent race were ever equalled in number by any former period; for ſo widely is ſpread the itch of literary praiſe, that almoſt every man is an author, either in act or in purpoſe; has either beſtowed his favours on the public, or with-holds them, that they may be more ſeaſonably offered, or made more worthy of acceptance.

In former times, the pen, like the ſword, was conſidered as conſigned by nature to the hands of men; the ladies contented themſelves with private virtues and domeſtic excellence; and a female writer, like a female warrior, was conſidered as a kind of excentric being, that deviated, however illuſtriouſly, from her due ſphere of motion, and was, therefore, rather to be gazed at with wonder, than countenanced by imitation. But as the times paſt are ſaid to have been a nation of Amazons, who drew the bow and wielded the battle-axe, formed encampments and waſted nations; the revolution

volution of years has now produced a generation of Amazons of the pen, who with the ſpirit of their predeceſſors have ſet maſculine tyranny at defiance, aſſerted their claim to the regions of ſcience, and ſeem reſolved to conteſt the uſurpations of virility.

Some, indeed, there are of both ſexes, who are authors only in deſire, but have not yet attained the power of executing their intentions; whoſe performances have not arrived at bulk ſufficient to form a volume, or who have not the confidence, however impatient of nameleſs obſcurity, to ſolicit openly the aſſiſtance of the printer. Among theſe are the innumerable correſpondents of public papers, who are always offering aſſiſtance which no man will receive, and ſuggeſting hints that are never taken, and who complain loudly of the perverſeneſs and arrogance of authors, lament their inſenſibility of their own intereſt, and fill the coffee-houſes with dark ſtories of performances by eminent hands, which have been offered and rejected.

To what cauſe this univerſal eagerneſs of writing can be properly aſcribed, I have not yet been able to diſcover. It is ſaid, that every art is propagated in proportion to the rewards conferred upon it; a poſition from which a ſtranger would naturally infer, that literature was now bleſſed with patronage far tranſcending the candour or munificence of the Auguſtine age; that the road to greatneſs was open to none but authors; and that by writing alone, riches and honour were to be obtained.

But ſince it is true, that writers, like other competitors, are very little diſpoſed to favour one another, it

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is not to be expected, that at a time when every man writes, any man will patronize; and, accordingly, there is not one that I can recollect at present, who profesſes the leaſt regard for the votaries of ſcience, invites the addreſſes of learned men, or ſeems to hope for reputation from any pen but his own.

The cauſe, therefore, of this epidemical conſpiracy for the deſtruction of paper, muſt remain a ſecret; nor can I diſcover, whether we owe it to the influences of the conſtellations, or the intemperature of ſeaſons; whether the long continuance of the wind at any ſingle point, or intoxicating vapours exhaled from the earth, have turned our nobles and our peaſants, our ſoldiers and traders, our men and women, all into wits, philoſophers, and writers.

It is, indeed, of more importance to ſearch out the cure than the cauſe of this intellectual malady; and he would deſerve well of his country, who, inſtead of amuſing himſelf with conjectural ſpeculations, ſhould find means of perſuading the peer to inſpect his ſteward's accounts, or repair the rural manſion of his anceſtors, who could replace the tradeſman behind his counter, and ſend back the farmer to the mattock and the flail.

General irregularities are known in time to remedy themſelves. By the conſtitution of ancient Egypt, the prieſthood was continually increaſing, till at length there was no people beſide themſelves; the eſtabliſhment was then diſſolved, and the number of prieſts was reduced and limited. Thus among us, writers will, perhaps, be multiplied, till no readers will be found, and then the ambition of writing muſt neceſſarily ceaſe.

But as it will be long before the cure is thus gradually effected, and the evil ſhould be ſtopped, if it be poſſible

poſſible, before it riſes to ſo great a height, I could wiſh that both ſexes would fix their thoughts upon ſome ſalutary conſiderations, which might repreſs their ardor for that reputation which not one of many thouſands is fated to obtain.

Let it be deeply impreſſed and frequently recollected, that he who has not obtained the proper qualifications of an author, can have no excuſe for the arrogance of writing, but the power of imparting to mankind ſomething neceſſary to be known. A man uneducated or unlettered, may ſometimes ſtart a uſeful thought, or make a lucky diſcovery, or obtain by chance ſome ſecret of nature, or ſome intelligence of facts, of which the moſt enlightened mind may be ignorant, and which it is better to reveal, though by a rude and unſkilful communication, than to loſe for ever by ſuppreſſing it.

But few will be juſtified by this plea; for of the innumerable books and pamphlets that have overflowed the nation, ſcarce one has made any addition to real knowledge, or contained more than a tranſpoſition of common ſentiments and a repetition of common phraſes.

It will be naturally inquired, when the man who feels an inclination to write, may venture to ſuppoſe himſelf properly qualified; and, ſince every man is inclined to think well of his own intellect, by what teſt he may try his abilities, without hazarding the contempt or reſentment of the public.

The firſt qualification of a writer, is a perfect knowledge of the ſubject which he undertakes to treat; ſince we cannot teach what we do not know, nor can properly undertake to inſtruct others while we are ourſelves

ſelves in want of inſtruction. The next requiſite is, that he be maſter of the language in which he delivers his ſentiments; if he treats of ſcience and demonſtration, that he has attained a ſtyle clear, pure, nervous, and expreſſive; if his topics be probable and perſuaſory, that he be able to recommend them by the ſuper-addition of elegance and imagery, to diſplay the colours of varied diction, and pour forth the muſic of modulated periods.

If it be again inquired, upon what principles any man ſhall conclude that he wants theſe powers, it may be readily anſwered, that no end is attained but by the proper means; he only can rationally preſume that he underſtands a ſubject, who has read and compared the writers that have hitherto diſcuſſed it, familiariſed their arguments to himſelf by long meditation, conſulted the foundations of different ſyſtems, and ſeparated truth from error by a rigorous examination.

In like manner, he only has a right to ſuppoſe that he can expreſs his thoughts, whatever they are, with perſpicuity or elegance, who has carefully peruſed the beſt authors, accurately noted their diverſities of ſtyle, diligently ſelected the beſt modes of diction, and familiariſed them by long habits of attentive practice.

No man is a rhetorician or philoſopher by chance. He who knows that he undertakes to write on queſtions which he has never ſtudied, may without heſitation determine, that he is about to waſte his own time and that of his reader, and expoſe himſelf to the deriſion of thoſe whom he aſpires to inſtruct; he that without forming his ſtyle by the ſtudy of the beſt models, haſtens to obtrude his compoſitions on the public, may be certain, that whatever hope or flattery may ſuggeſt, he

ſhall

ſhall ſhock the learned ear with barbariſms, and contribute, wherever his work ſhall be received, to the depravation of taſte and the corruption of language.

No. CXVI. Saturday, December 15. 1753.

——Æſtuat ingens
Imo in corde pudor, mixtoque inſania luctu.
Et furiis agitatus amor, & conſcia virtus.

VIRG.

Rage boiling from the bottom of his breaſt,
And ſorrow mix'd with ſhame his ſoul oppreſt;
And conſcious worth lay lab'ring in his thought:
And love by jealouſy to madneſs wrought.

DRYDEN.

THUNDER and a ghoſt have been frequently introduced into tragedy by barren and mechanical play-wrights, as proper objects to impreſs terror and aſtoniſhment, where the diſtreſs has not been important enough to render it probable that nature would interpoſe for the ſake of the ſufferers, and where theſe objects themſelves have not been ſupported by ſuitable ſentiments. *Thunder has*, however, been made uſe of with great judgment

judgment and good effect by Shakeſpeare, to heighten and impreſs the diſtreſſes of Lear.

The venerable and wretched old king is driven out by both his daughters, without neceſſaries and without attendants, not only in the night, but in the midſt of a moſt dreadful ſtorm, and on a bleak and barren heath. On his firſt appearance in this ſituation, he draws an artful and pathetic compariſon betwixt the ſeverity of the tempeſt and of his daughters:

Rumble thy belly full! ſpit, fire, ſpout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters.
I tax not you, ye elements, with unkindneſs;
I never gave you kingdom, called you children:
You owe me no ſubſcription. Then let fall
Your horrible pleaſure. Here I ſtand your ſlave;
A poor, infirm, weak, and deſpiſed old man!

The ſtorm continuing with equal violence, he drops for a moment the conſideration of his own miſeries, and takes occaſion to moraliſe on the terrors which ſuch commotions of nature ſhould raiſe in the breaſt of ſecret and unpuniſhed villainy:

——Tremble thou wretch,
That haſt within thee undivulged crimes
Unwhipt of juſtice! Hide thee, thou bloody hand;
Thou perjur'd, and thou ſimilar of virtue,
That art inceſtuous!—
—Cloſe pent-up guilts
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
Theſe dreadful ſummoners grace!

He

He adds, with reference to his own caſe,

——I am a man
More ſinn'd againſt, than ſinning.

Kent moſt earneſtly entreats him to enter a ho
which he had diſcovered on the heath; and on pr
ſing him again and again to take ſhelter there, Le
exclaims,

Wilt break my heart!——

Much is contained in theſe four words; as if he h
ſaid, "the kindneſs and the gratitude of this ſerva
"exceeds that of my own children. Though I ha
"given them a kingdom, yet have they baſely diſcar
"ed me, and ſuffered a head ſo old and white
"mine to be expoſed to this terrible tempeſt, whi
"this fellow pities and would protect me from
"rage. I cannot bear this kindneſs from a perfe
"ſtranger; it breaks my heart." All this ſeems
be included in that ſhort exclamation, which anoth
writer, leſs acquainted with nature, would have d
played at large; ſuch a ſuppreſſion of ſentiments plai
ly implied, is judicious and affecting. The reflectio
that follow are drawn likewiſe from an intimate kno
ledge of man:

When the mind's free,
The body's delicate; the tempeſt in my mind
Doth from my ſenſes take all feeling elſe,
Save what beats there——

He

Here the remembrance of his daughters behaviour ruſhes upon him, and he exclaims, full of the idea of its unparalleled cruelty,

——Filial ingratitude!
Is it not, as this mouth ſhould tear this hand
For lifting food to it!

He then changes his ſtyle, and vows with impotent menaces, as if ſtill in poſſeſſion of the power he had reſigned, to revenge himſelf on his oppreſſors, and to ſteel his breaſt with fortitude:

——But I'll puniſh home.
No, I will weep no more!——

But the ſenſe of his ſufferings returns again, and he forgets the reſolution he had formed the moment before:

In ſuch a night
To ſhut me out!—Pour on, I will endure—
In ſuch a night as this!——

At which, with a beautiful apoſtrophe, he ſuddenly addreſſes himſelf to his abſent daughters, tenderly reminding them of the favours he had ſo lately and ſo liberally conferred upon them:

——O Regan, Goneril,
Your old kind father; whoſe frank heart gave all!
O that way madneſs lies; let me ſhun that;
No more of that!

The turns of paſſion in theſe few lines are ſo quick and various, that I thought they merited to be minutely pointed out by a kind of perpetual commentary.

The

The mind is never ſo ſenſibly diſpoſed to pity the misfortunes of others, as when it is itſelf ſubdued and ſoftened by calamity. Adverſity diffuſes a kind of ſacred calm over the breaſt, that is the parent of thoughtfulneſs and meditation. The following reflections of Lear in his next ſpeech, when his paſſion has ſubſided for a ſhort interval, are equally proper and ſtriking:

Poor naked wretches, whereſoe'er ye are,
That bide the pelting of this pityleſs ſtorm!
How ſhall your houſeleſs heads, and unfed ſides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedneſs, defend you
From ſeaſons ſuch as theſe!

He concludes with a ſentiment finely ſuited to his condition, and worthy to be written in characters of gold in the cloſet of every monarch upon earth:

O! I have ta'en
Too little care of this. Take phyſic, pomp!
Expoſe thyſelf to feel what wretches feel;
That thou may'ſt ſhake the ſuperflux to them,
And ſhew the Heaven's more juſt!——

Lear being at laſt perſuaded to take ſhelter in the hovel, the poet has artfully contrived to lodge there Edgar, the diſcarded ſon of Glouceſter, who counterfeits the character and habit of a mad beggar, haunted by an evil demon, and whoſe ſuppoſed ſufferings are enumerated with an inimitable wildneſs of fancy; "Whom the foul fiend hath led through fire, and "through flame, through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog

" and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow,
" and halters in his pew; ſet ratſbane by his por-
" ridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay
" trotting horſe over four inch'd bridges, to courſe
" his own ſhadow for a traitor.—Bleſs thy five wits,
" Tom's a cold!" The aſſumed madneſs of Edgar, and the real diſtraction of Lear, form a judicious contraſt.

Upon perceiving the nakedneſs and wretchedneſs of this figure, the poor kings aſks a queſtion that I never could read without ſtrong emotions of pity and admiration:

What! have his daughters brought him to this paſs?
Couldſt thou ſave nothing? Didſt thou give them all?

And when Kent aſſures him, that the beggar hath no daughters; he haſtily anſwers;

Death, traitor, nothing could have ſubdued nature
To ſuch a lowneſs, but his unkind daughters.

Afterwards, upon the calm contemplation of the miſery of Edgar, he breaks out into the following ſerious and pathetic reflection: " Thou wert better in thy
" grave, than to anſwer with thy uncovered body this
" extremity of the ſkies. Is man no more than this?
" Conſider him well. Thou ow'ſt the worm no ſilk,
" the beaſt no hide, the ſheep no wool, the cat no
" perfume. Ha! here's three of us are ſophiſticated.
" Thou art the thing itſelf: unaccommodated man is
" no more than ſuch a poor, bare, forked animal as

" thou art. Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton
" here."

Shakeſpeare has no where exhibited more inimitable ſtrokes of his art, than in this uncommon ſcene; where he has ſo well conducted even the natural jargon of the beggar, and the jeſtings of the fool, which in other hands muſt have ſunk into burleſque, that they contribute to heighten the pathetic to a very high degree.

The heart of Lear having been agitated and torn by a conflict of ſuch oppoſite and tumultuous paſſions, it is not wonderful that his " wits ſhould now begin " to unſettle." The firſt plain indication of the loſs of his reaſon, is his calling Edgar a " learned The-" ban;" and telling Kent, that " he will keep ſtill " with his philoſopher." When he next appears, he imagines he is puniſhing his daughters. The imagery is extremely ſtrong, and chills one with horror to read it;

To have a thouſand with red burning ſpits
Come hizzing in upon them!——

As the fancies of lunatics have an extraordinary force and livelineſs, and render the objects of their frenzy as it were preſent to their eyes, Lear actually thinks himſelf ſuddenly reſtored to his kingdom, and ſeated in judgment to try his daughters for their cruelties:

I'll ſee their trial firſt; bring in the evidence.
Thou robed man of juſtice take thy place;

And

And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity,
Bench by his ſide. You are of the commiſſion,
Sit you too. Arraign her firſt, 'tis Goneril—
And here's another, whoſe warpt looks proclaim
What ſtore her heart is made of.——

. . . . . .

Here he imagines that Regan eſcapes out of his hands, and he eagerly exclaims;

. . . . . .

——Stop her there.
Arms, arms, ſword, fire—Corruption in the place!
Falſe juſticer, why haſt thou let her 'ſcape?

. . . . . .

A circumſtance follows that is ſtrangely moving indeed: for he fancies that his favourite domeſtic creatures, that uſed to fawn upon and careſs him, and of which he was eminently fond, have now their tempers changed, and join to inſult him:

——The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, ſee! they bark at me.

He again reſumes his imaginary power, and orders them to anatomize Regan; "See what breeds about "her heart—Is there any cauſe in nature that "makes theſe hard hearts! You, Sir," ſpeaking to Edgar, "I entertain for one of my hundred;" a circumſtance moſt artfully introduced to remind us of the firſt affront he received, and to fix our thoughts on the cauſes of his diſtraction.

General criticiſm is on all ſubjects uſeleſs and unentertaining; but is more than commonly abſurd with reſpect to Shakeſpeare, who muſt be accompanied ſtep

by ſtep, and ſcene by ſcene, in his gradual developements of characters and paſſions, and whoſe finer features muſt be ſingly pointed out, if we would do complete juſtice to his genuine beauties. It would have been eaſy to have declared, in general terms, "that "the madneſs of Lear was very natural and pathetic;" and the reader might then have eſcaped, what he may, perhaps, call a multitude of well-known quotations: but then it had been impoſſible to exhibit a perfect picture of the ſecret workings and changes of Lear's mind, which vary in each ſucceeding paſſage, and which render an allegation of each particular ſentiment abſolutely neceſſary.

No.

No. CXVII. Tuesday, December 18, 1753.

Nequiequam patrias tentâsti lubricus artes. VIRG.

Caught in the train which thou thyself hast laid.
DRYDEN.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR,

I WILL not anticipate the subject of this letter, by relating the motives from which I have written it; nor shall I expect it to be published, if, when you have read it, you do not think that it contains more than one topic of instruction.

My mother has been dead so long that I do not remember her; and when I was in my eighteenth year, I was left an orphan with a fortune of twenty thousand pounds at my own disposal. I have been often told, that I am handsome; and I have some reasons to believe it to be true, which are very far from gratifying my vanity or conferring happiness.

I was soon addressed by many lovers, from among whom I selected Hilario, the elder brother of a good family, whose paternal estate was something more than equivalent to my fortune.

Hilario was univerſally admired as a man of ſenſe; and to confeſs the truth, not much leſs as a man of pleaſure. His character appeared to riſe in proportion as it was thought to endanger thoſe about him; he derived new dignity not only from the ſilence of the men, but the bluſhes of the ladies; and thoſe, whoſe wit or virtue did not ſuffer by the admiſſion of ſuch a gueſt, were honoured as perſons who could treat upon equal terms with a hero, who was become formidable by the number of his conqueſts: his company, therefore, was courted by all whom their fears did not reſtrain; the reſt conſidered him as moving in a ſphere above them, and, in proportion as they were able to imitate him, they became vicious and petulant in their own circle.

I was myſelf captivated with his manner and converſation; I hoped that upon underſtanding I ſhould be able to engraft virtue; I was rather encouraged than cautioned by my friends; and after a few months courtſhip I became his wife.

During a ſhort time all my expectations were gratified, and I exulted in my choice. Hilario was at once tender and polite; preſent pleaſures were heightened by the anticipation of future; my imagination was perpetually wandering among the ſcenes of poetry and romance; I appropriated every luxurious deſcription of happy lovers; and believed, that whatever time ſhould take from deſire, would be added to complacency; and that in old age we ſhould only exchange the tumultuous ecſtaſy of love, for the calm, rational, and exalted delights of friendſhip, which every year would increaſe by new reciprocations of kindneſs, more tried fidelity, and implicit confidence.

But

But from this pleaſing dream it was not long before I awaked. Although it was the whole ſtudy of my life to unite my pleaſures with thoſe of Hilario, to regulate my conduct by his will, and thus prolong the felicity which was reflected from his boſom to mine; yet his viſits abroad in which I was not a party became more frequent, and his general behaviour leſs kind. I perceived that when we were alone his mind was often abſent, and that my prattle became irkſome: my aſſiduities to recover his attention, and excite him to cheerfulneſs, were ſometimes ſuffered with a cold civility, ſometimes wholly neglected, and ſometimes peeviſhly repreſſed as ill-timed officiouſneſs, by which he was rather diſturbed than obliged. I was, indeed, at length convinced, with whatever reluctance, that neither my perſon nor my mind had any charm that could ſtand in competition with variety; and though, as I remember, I never even with my looks upbraided him, yet I frequently lamented myſelf, and ſpent thoſe hours in which I was forſaken by Hilario in ſolitude and tears.

But my diſtreſs ſtill increaſed, and one injury made way for another. Hilario, almoſt as ſoon as he ceaſed to be kind, became jealous; he knew that diſappointed wiſhes, and the reſentment which they produce, concur to render beauty leſs ſolicitous to avoid temptation, and leſs able to reſiſt it; and as I did not complain of that which he knew I could not but diſcover he thought he had greater reaſon to ſuſpect that I made repriſals: thus his ſagacity multiplied his vices, and my virtue defeated its own purpoſe.

Some maxims, however, which I had gathered from novels and plays, were ſtill uppermoſt in my mind.

I reflected often upon the arts of Amanda, and the perſevering tenderneſs and diſcretion of Lady Eaſy; and I believed, as I had been taught by the ſequel of every ſtory, that they could not be practiſed without ſucceſs, but againſt ſordid ſtupidity and obdurate ill-nature; againſt the Brutes and the Sullens, whom, on the contrary, it was ſcarce a crime to puniſh, by admitting a rake of parts to pleaſures of which they were unworthy.

From ſuch maxims, and ſuch examples, I therefore derived ſome hope. I wiſhed earneſtly to detect Hilario in his infidelity; that in the moment of conviction I might rouſe his ſenſibility of my wrongs, and exalt his opinion of my merit; that I might cover him with confuſion, melt him with tenderneſs, and double his obligations by generoſity.

The opportunity for which I had ſo often wiſhed, but never dared to hope, at length arrived. I learned by accident one morning, that he intended to go in the evening to a maſquerade; and I immediately conceived a deſign to diſcover his dreſs, and follow him to the theatre; to ſingle him out, make ſome advances, and if poſſible bring on an aſſignation, where, in the ardour of his firſt addreſs, I might ſtrike him with aſtoniſhment by taking off my maſk, reprove him without reproach, and forgive him without parade, mingling with the ſoft diſtreſs of violated affection the calm dignity of injured virtue.

My imagination was fired with theſe images, which I was impatient to realize. My pride, which had hitherto ſuſtained me above complaint, and thrown a veil of cheerfulneſs over my diſtreſs, would not ſuffer me to employ an aſſiſtant in the project I had undertaken;

taken; becauſe this could not be done without revealing my ſuſpicions, and confiding my peace to the breaſt of another, by whoſe malice or caprice it might be deſtroyed, and to whom I ſhould, therefore, be brought into the moſt ſlaviſh ſubjection, without inſuring the ſecrecy of which my dependence would be the price. I therefore reſolved, at whatever riſk of diſappointment or detection, to trace him to the warehouſe where his habit was to be hired, and diſcover that which he ſhould chooſe myſelf.

He had ordered his chariot at eleven: I, therefore, wrapped myſelf up in an undreſs, and ſate alone in my room till I ſaw him drive from the door. I then came down, and as ſoon as he had turned into St. James's ſtreet, which was not more than twenty yards, I went after him, and meeting with a hackney-coach at the end of the ſtreet, I got haſtily into it, and ordered the driver to follow the chariot at ſome diſtance, and to ſtop when it ſtopped.

I pulled up both the windows; and after half an hour ſpent in the moſt tormenting ſuſpenſe and anxiety, it ſtopped at the end of Taviſtock ſtreet. I looked haſtily out of the window, hiding my face with my handkerchief, and ſaw Hilario alight at the diſtance of about forty yards, and go into a warehouſe of which I could eaſily diſtinguiſh the ſign. I waited till he came out; and as ſoon as the chariot was out of ſight, I diſcharged the coach, and going immediately to the warehouſe that Hilario had left, I pretended to want a habit for myſelf. I ſaw many lying upon the counter, which I ſuppoſed had been brought out for Hilario's choice; about theſe, therefore, I was very inquiſitive, and took particular notice of a very rich Turkiſh dreſs,

which one of the ſervants took up to put away. When I ſaw he was about to remove it, I aſked haſtily whether it was hired, and learned with unſpeakable ſatisfaction, that it had been choſen by the gentleman who was juſt gone. Thus far I ſucceeded to the utmoſt of my hopes, not only by diſcovering Hilario's dreſs, but by his choice of one ſo very remarkable; for if he had choſen a domino, my ſcheme would have been rendered impracticable, becauſe in a domino I could not certainly have diſtinguiſhed him from others.

As I had now gained the intelligence I wanted, I was impatient to leave the ſhop; which it was not difficult to do, as it was juſt filled with ladies from two coaches, and the people were in a hurry to accommodate them. My dreſs did not attract much notice, nor promiſe much advantage; I was, therefore, willingly ſuffered to depart, upon ſlightly leaving word that I would call again.

When I got into the ſtreet, I conſidered that it would not have been prudent to have hired a habit, where Hilario would either come to dreſs, or ſend for that which he had hired for himſelf: I, therefore, took another coach at the end of Southampton ſtreet, and went to a ſhop near the Hay-market, where I had before purchaſed a capuchin and ſome other trifles, and where I knew habits were to be hired, though not in ſo public a manner as at other places.

I now returned home; and ſuch was the joy and expectation which my ſucceſs inſpired, that I had forgot I had ſucceeded only in an attempt, for which I could find neither motive nor apology but in my wretchedneſs.

During

During the interval between my return and the time when the doors of the theatre were to be opened, I ſuffered the utmoſt inquietude and impatience. I looked every moment at my watch, could ſcarce believe that it did not by ſome accident go too ſlow, and was continually liſtening to diſcover whether it had not ſtopped: but the lingering hour at length arrived; and though I was among the firſt that entered, yet it was not long before I ſingled out my victim, and found means to attract his regard.

I had, when I was at ſchool, learned a way of expreſſing the alphabet with my fingers, which I have ſince diſcovered to be more generally known than at that time I imagined. Hilario, during his courtſhip, had once obſerved me uſing it to a lady who had been my ſchool-fellow, and would never let me reſt till I had taught it him. In this manner I ſaw my Turk converſing with a Nun, from whom he ſuddenly turned with an appearance of vexation and diſappointment. I thought this a favourable opportunity to accoſt him; and, therefore, as he paſſed by me, I pulled him gently by the ſleeve, and ſpelt with my fingers the words, "I underſtand." At firſt I was afraid of being diſcovered by ſhewing my art; but I reflected, that it would effectually ſecure me from being diſcovered by my voice, which I conſidered as the more formidable danger. I perceived that he was greatly pleaſed; and after a very ſhort converſation, which he ſeemed to make a point of continuing in the manner I had begun, an aſſignation was made, in conſequence of which we proceeded in chairs to a bagnio near Covent-Garden. During this journey my mind was in great agitation; and it is difficult to determine whether

pleaſure or pain was predominant. I did not, however, fail to anticipate my triumph in the confuſion of Hilario; I conceived the manner and the terms in which I would addreſs him, and exult in the ſuperiority which I ſhould acquire by this oppoſition of his character to mine.

No. CXVIII. Saturday, December 22, 1753.

Animorum
Impulſu, et cæcâ magnaque cupidine ducti. Juv.

By blind impulſe of eager paſſion driv'n.

He was ready to receive me when my chair was brought into the entry, and giving me his hand, led me haſtily up ſtairs. As ſoon as we entered the room he ſhut the door, and, taking off his maſk, ran to me with the utmoſt impatience to take off mine. This was the important moment; but at this moment I diſcovered, with inexpreſſible aſtoniſhment and terror, that the perſon with whom I was alone in a brothel, was not Hilario, but Caprinus, a wretch whom I well remembered to have ſeen among the rakes that he frequently brought to his table.

At this ſight, ſo unexpected and ſo dreadful, I ſhrieked aloud, and threw myſelf from him into an eaſy

eaſy chair that ſtood by the bedſide. Caprinus, probably believing I had fainted, haſtily tore away my maſk to give me air. At the firſt view of my face, he ſtarted back, and gazed at me with the ſame wonder that had fixed my eyes upon him. But our amazement was the next moment increaſed; for Hilario, who had ſucceeded in his intrigue, with whatever lady, happened to be in the next room, and either alarmed by the voice of diſtreſs, or knowing it to be mine, ruſhed in at the door which flew open before him; but, at the next ſtep, ſtood fixed in the ſame ſtupor of aſtoniſhment which had ſeized us. After a moment's recollection, he came up to me, and, dragging me to the candle, gazed ſtedfaſtly in my face with a look ſo frightful as never to be forgotten; it was the pale countenance of rage, which contempt had diſtorted with a ſmile; his lips quivered; and he told me, in a voice ſcarce articulate, that "though I might well be "frighted at having ſtumbled upon an acquaintance "whom I doubted whether I could truſt, yet I ſhould "not have ſcreamed ſo loud." After this inſult, he quitted me with as much negligence as he could aſſume; and bowing obſequiouſly to Caprinus, told him, "he would leave me to his care." Caprinus had not ſufficient preſence of mind to reply; nor had I power to make any attempt, either to pacify or retain Hilario.

When he was gone I burſt into tears, but was ſtill unable to ſpeak. From this agony Caprinus laboured to relieve me; and I began to hope, that he ſincerely participated my diſtreſs: Caprinus, however, ſoon appeared to be chiefly ſolicitous to improve what, with reſpect to himſelf, he began to think a fortunate

miſtake.

miſtake. He had no conception, that I intended an aſſignation with my huſband; but believed, like Hilario, that I had miſtaken the perſon for whom my favours were intended: while he lamented my diſtreſs and diſappointment, therefore, he preſſed my hand with great ardor, wiſhed that he had been thought worthy of my confidence and my love; and to facilitate his deſign upon the wife of his friend, declared himſelf a man of honour, and that he would maintain the character at the hazard of his life.

To ſuch an addreſs in ſuch circumſtances, what could I reply? Grief had diſarmed my reſentment, and the pride of ſuſpected virtue had forſaken me. I expreſſed myſelf, not in reproaches but complaints: and abruptly diſengaging myſelf from him, I adjured him to tell me, "how he had procured his habit, and whether it "had not been hired by Hilario?" He ſeemed to be ſtruck with the queſtion, and the manner in which I urged it! "I hired it," ſaid he, myſelf, at a warehouſe "in Taviſtock Street: but when I came to demand it, "I was told it had been the ſubject of much confu- "ſion and diſpute. When I made my agreement, the "maſter was abſent; and the ſervant neglecting to ac- "quaint him with it at his return, he afterwards, in "the abſence of the ſervant, made the ſame agreement "with another; but I know not with whom; and it "was with great difficulty that he was brought to re- "linquiſh his claim, after he had been convinced of "the miſtake."

I now clearly diſcovered the ſnare in which I had been taken, and could only lament that it was impoſſible to eſcape. Whether Caprinus began to conceive my deſign, or whether he was indeed touched at my diſtreſs

diſtreſs, which all his attempts to alleviate increaſed, I know not; but he deſiſted from further proteſtations and importunity, and at my earneſt requeſt procured me a chair, and left me to my fortune.

I now reflected, with inconceivable anguiſh, upon the change which a few hours had made in my condition. I had left my houſe in the height of expectation, that in a few hours I ſhould add to the dignity of an untainted reputation the felicity of conjugal endearments. I returned diſappointed and degraded; detected in all the circumſtances of guilt, to which I had not approached even in thought; having juſtified the jealouſy which I ſought to remove, and forfeited the eſteem which I hoped to improve to veneration.

With theſe thoughts I once more entered my dreſſing-room, which was on the ſame floor with my chamber, and in leſs than half an hour I heard Hilario come in.

He went immediately to his chamber; and being told that I was in the next room, he locked the door, but did not go to bed, for I could hear him walk backward and forward all the night.

Early in the morning I ſent a ſealed billet to him by his valet; for I had not made a confidante, even of my woman; it contained only a preſſing intreaty to be heard, and a ſolemn aſſeveration of my innocence, which I hoped it would not be impoſſible to prove. He ſent me a verbal anſwer, that I might come to him; to him, therefore, I went, not as a judge but a criminal; not to accuſe him, whom I knew to be guilty, but to juſtify myſelf, whom I knew to be innocent: and, at this moment, I would have given the world to have

been

been reſtored to that ſtate, which the day before I had thought intolerable.

I found him in great agitation; which yet he laboured to conceal. I, therefore, haſted to relate my project, the motives from which it was undertaken, and the means by which it had been diſappointed. He heard me with calmneſs and attention, till I related the particular of the habit; this threw him into a new fit of jealouſy, and ſtarting from his ſeat, "What," ſaid he, "have you paid for this intelligence? Of whom "could you learn it, but the wretch with whom I left "you? Did he not, when he found you were diſap-"pointed of another, ſolicit for himſelf?" Here he pauſed for my reply; and as I could not deny the fact, I was ſilent; my inviolable regard for truth was miſtaken for the confuſion of guilt, and equally prevented my juſtification. His paſſion returned with yet greater violence. "I know," ſaid he, "that Caprinus relat-"ed this incident, only that you might be enabled "to impoſe upon my credulity, and that he might "obtain a participation of the favours which you la-"viſhed upon others: but I am not thus to be deceiv-"ed by the concurrence of accident with cunning, nor "reconciled to the infamy which you have brought "upon my name." With this injurious reproach he would have left me; but I caught hold of him, and intreated that he would go with me to the warehouſe, where the teſtimony of perſons, wholly diſintereſted, might convince him that I was there immediately after him, and inquired which dreſs he had choſen. To this requeſt he replied, by aſking me, in a peremptory tone "Whether Caprinus had not told me where the "habit was hired?" As I was ſtruck with the ſud-

denneſs

denneſs and the deſign of the queſtion, I had not fortitude to confeſs a truth which yet I diſdained to deny. Hilario again triumphed in the ſucceſs detection of my artifices; and told me, with a ſneer of inſupportable contempt and deriſion, that "he who had ſo kindly "directed me to find my witneſſes, was too able a ſo-"licitor, not to acquaint them what teſtimony they "were to give."

Expoſtulation was now at an end; and I diſdained to intreat any mercy under the imputation of guilt. All that remained, therefore, was ſtill to hide my wretchedneſs in my boſom; and, if poſſible, to preſerve that character abroad, which I had loſt at home. But this I ſoon found to be a vain attempt; it was immediately whiſpered, as a ſecret, that, "Hilario, who had long "ſuſpected me of a criminal correſpondence, had at "length traced me from the maſquerade to a bagnio, "and ſurpriſed me with a fellow." It was in vain for me to attempt the recovery of my character, by giving another turn to this report, for the principal facts I could not deny; and thoſe who appeared to be moſt my friends, after they had attended to what they call nice diſtinctions and minute circumſtances, could only ſay that it was a dark affair, and they hoped I was not ſo guilty as was generally believed. I was avoided by my female acquaintance as infamous; if I went abroad, I was pointed out with a whiſper, and a nod; and if I ſtayed at home, I ſaw no face but my ſervant's. Thoſe, whoſe levity I had ſilently cenſured by declining to practiſe it, now revenged themſelves of the virtue by which they were condemned, and thanked God they had never yet picked up fellows, though they were not ſo ſqueamiſh as to refuſe going to a ball. But this

was

was not the worſt; every libertine, whoſe fortune authoriſed the inſolence, was now making me offers of protection in nameleſs ſcrawls, and feared not to ſolicit me to adultery; they dared to hope I ſhould accept their propoſal by directing to A B, who declares, like Caprinus, thot he is a man of honour, and will not ſcruple to run my huſband through the body, who now, indeed, thought himſelf authoriſed to treat me with every ſpecies of cruelty but blows, at the ſame time that his houſe was a perpetual ſcene of lewdneſs and debauchery.

Reiterated provocation and inſult ſoon became intolerable; I therefore applied to a diſtant relation, who ſo far intereſted himſelf in my behalf as to obtain me a ſeparate maintenance, with which I retired into the country; and in this world have no hope but to perpetuate my obſcurity.

In this obſcurity, however, your paper is known; and I have communicated an adventure to the Adventurer, not merely to indulge complaint, or gratify curioſity, but becauſe I think it confirms ſome principles which you have before illuſtrated.

Thoſe who doubt of a future retribution, may reflect, that I have been involved in all the miſeries of guilt, except the reproach of conſcience and the fear of hell, by an attempt which was intended to reclaim another from vice, and obtain the reward of my own virtue.

My example may deter others from venturing to the verge of rectitude, and aſſuming the appearance of evil. On the other hand, thoſe who judge of mere appearances without charity, may remark, that no conduct was ever condemned with leſs ſhew of injurious ſeverity,

ty, nor yet with leſs juſtice than mine. Whether my narrative will be believed indeed I cannot determine; but where innocence is poſſible, it is dangerous to impute guilt, "becauſe, with whatſoever judgment men "judge they ſhall be judged;" a truth which, if it was remembered and believed by all who profeſs to receive it upon Divine Authority, would impoſe ſilence upon the cenſorious, and extort candour from the ſelfiſh. And I hope that the ladies, who read my ſtory, will never hear, but with indignation, that the underſtanding of a Libertine is a pledge of reformation; for his life cannot be known without abhorrence, nor ſhared without ruin.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

DESDEMONA.

No.

No. CXIX. Tuesday, December 25, 1753.

Latiùs regnes, avidum domando
Spiritum, quàm si Lybiam remotis
Gadibus jungas, et uterque Pœnus
Serviat uni. HOR.

By virtue's precepts to controul
The thirsty cravings of the soul,
Is over wider realms to reign
Unenvied monarch, than if Spain
You could to distant Lybia join,
And both the Carthages were thine.

FRANCIS.

WHEN Socrates was asked, "which of mortal men "was to be accounted nearest to the Gods in happi- "ness?" he answered, "that man, who is in want of "the fewest things."

In this answer, Socrates left it to be guessed by his auditors, whether, by the exemption from want which was to constitute happiness, he meant amplitude of possessions or contraction of desire. And, indeed, there is so little difference between them, that Alexander the Great confessed the inhabitant of a tub the next man to the master of the world; and left a declaration to future

future ages, that if he was not Alexander, he ſhould wiſh to be Diogenes.

Theſe two ſtates, however, though they reſemble each other in their conſequence, differ widely with reſpect to the facility with which they may be attained. To make great acquiſitions can happen to very few; and in the uncertainty of human affairs, to many it will be incident to labour without reward, and to loſe what they already poſſeſs by endeavours to make it more; ſome will always want abilities, and others opportunities to accumulate wealth. It is therefore happy, that nature has allowed us a more certain and eaſy road to plenty; every man may grow rich by contracting his wiſhes, and by quiet acquieſcence in what has been given him, ſupply the abſence of more.

Yet ſo far is almoſt every man from emulating the happineſs of the Gods, by any other means than graſping at their power; that it ſeems to be the great buſineſs of life to create wants as faſt as they are ſatisfied. It has been long obſerved by moraliſts, that every man ſquanders or loſes a great part of that life, of which every man knows and deplores the ſhortneſs; and it may be remarked with equal juſtneſs, that though every man laments his own inſufficiency to his happineſs, and knows himſelf a neceſſitous and precarious being, inceſſantly ſoliciting the aſſiſtance of others, and feeling wants which his own art or ſtrength cannot ſupply; yet there is no man, who does not, by the ſuperaddition of unnatural cares, render himſelf ſtill more dependent; who does not create an artificial poverty, and ſuffer himſelf to feel pain for the want of that, of which, when it is gained, he can have no enjoyment.

In

It muſt, indeed, be allowed, that as we loſe part of our time becauſe it ſteals away ſilent and inviſible, and many an hour is paſſed before we recollect that it is paſſing; ſo unnatural deſires inſinuate themſelves unobſerved into the mind, and we do not perceive that they are gaining upon us, till the pain which they give us awakens us to notice. No man is ſufficiently vigilant to take account of every minute of his life, or to watch every motion of his heart. Much of our time likewiſe is ſacrificed to cuſtom; we trifle, becauſe we ſee others trifle: in the ſame manner we catch from example the contagion of deſire; we ſee all about us buſied in purſuit of imaginary good, and begin to buſtle in the ſame chace, leſt greater activity ſhould triumph over us.

It is true, that to man, as a member of ſociety, many things become neceſſary, which, perhaps, in a ſtate of nature are ſuperfluous; and that many things, not abſolutely neceſſary, are yet ſo uſeful and convenient, that they cannot eaſily be ſpared. I will make yet a more ample and liberal conceſſion. In opulent ſtates and regular governments, the temptations to wealth and rank, end to the diſtinctions that follow them, are ſuch as no force of underſtanding finds it eaſy to reſiſt.

If, therefore, I ſaw the quiet of life diſturbed only by endeavours after wealth and honour; by ſolicitude, which the world, whether juſtly or not, conſidered as important; I ſhould ſcarcely have had courage to inculcate any precepts of moderation and forbearance. He that is engaged in a purſuit, in which all mankind profeſs to be his rivals, is ſupported by the authority of all mankind in the proſecution of his deſign, and will, therefore, ſcarcely ſtop to hear the lectures of a ſolitary philoſopher.

philoſopher. Nor am I certain, that the accumulation of honeſt gain ought to be hindered, or the ambition of juſt honours always to be repreſſed. Whatever can enable the poſſeſſor to confer any benefit upon others, may be deſired upon virtuous principles; and we ought not too raſhly to accuſe any man of intending to confine the influence of his acquiſitions to himſelf.

But if we look round upon mankind, whom ſhall we find among thoſe that fortune permits to form their own manners, that is not tormenting himſelf with a wiſh for ſomething, of which all the pleaſure and benefit will ceaſe at the moment of attainment? One man is beggaring his poſterity to build a houſe, which when finiſhed he never will inhabit; another is levelling mountains to open a proſpect, which, when he has once enjoyed it, he can enjoy no more; another is painting cielings, carving wainſcot, and filling his apartments with coſtly furniture, only that ſome neighbouring houſe may not be richer or finer than his own.

That ſplendor and elegance are not deſirable, I am not ſo abſtracted from life as to inculcate; but if we inquire cloſely into the reaſon for which they are eſteemed, we ſhall find them valued principally as evidences of wealth. Nothing, therefore, can ſhew greater depravity of underſtanding, than to delight in the ſhew when the reality is wanting; or voluntarily to become poor, that ſtrangers may for a time imagine us to be rich.

But there are yet minuter objects and more trifling anxieties. Men may be found, who are kept from ſleep by the want of a ſhell particularly variegated! who are waſting their lives, in ſtratagems to obtain a book in a language which they do not underſtand; who

pine

pine with envy at the flowers of another man's parterre; who hover like vultures round the owner of a foſſil, in hopes to plunder his cabinet at his death; and who would not much regret to ſee a ſtreet in flames, if a box of medals might be ſcattered in the tumult.

He that imagines me to ſpeak of theſe ſages in terms exaggerated and hyperbolical, has converſed but little with the race of virtuoſos. A ſlight acquaintance with their ſtudies, and a few viſits to their aſſemblies, would inform him, that nothing is ſo worthleſs, but that prejudice and caprice can give it value; nor any thing of ſo little uſe, but that by indulging an idle competition or unreaſonable pride, a man may make it to himſelf one of the neceſſaries of life.

Deſires like theſe, I may ſurely, without incurring the cenſure of moroſeneſs, adviſe every man to repel when they invade his mind; or if he admits them, never to allow them any greater influence than is neceſſary to give petty employments the power of pleaſing, and diverſify the day with ſlight amuſements.

An ardent wiſh, whatever be its object, will always be able to interrupt tranquillity. What we believe ourſelves to want, torments us not in proportion to its real value, but according to the eſtimation by which we have rated it in our own minds: in ſome diſeaſes, the patient has been obſerved to long for food, which ſcarce any extremity of hunger would in health have compelled him to ſwallow; but while his organs were thus depraved, the craving was irreſiſtible, nor could any reſt be obtained till it was appeaſed by compliance. Of the ſame nature are the irregular appetites of the mind; though they are often excited by trifles, they

they are equally diſquieting with real wants: the Roman, who wept at the death of his lamprey, felt the ſame degree of ſorrow that extorts tears on other occaſions.

Inordinate deſires, of whatever kind, ought to be repreſſed upon yet a higher conſideration; they muſt be conſidered as enemies not only to Happineſs but to Virtue. There are men among thoſe commonly reckoned the learned and the wiſe, who ſpare no ſtratagems to remove a competitor at an auction, who will ſink the price of a rarity at the expence of truth, and whom it is not ſafe to truſt alone in a library or cabinet. Theſe are faults, which the fraternity ſeem to look upon as jocular miſchiefs, or to think excuſed by the violence of the temptation: but I ſhall always fear that he, who accuſtoms himſelf to fraud in little things, wants only opportunity to practiſe it in greater: "he that has hardened himſelf by killing a ſheep," ſays Pythagoras, "will with leſs reluctance ſhed the "blood of a man."

To prize every thing according to its real uſe, ought to be the aim of a rational being. There are few things which can much conduce to Happineſs, and, therefore, few things to be ardently deſired. He that looks upon the buſineſs and buſtle of the world, with the philoſophy with which Socrates ſurveyed the fair at Athens, will turn away at laſt with his exclation, "How many things are here which I do not "want!"

T

No. CXX. Saturday, December 29, 1753.

——————Ultima ſemper
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo ſupremaque funera debet.

OVID.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded bleſt before he die.

ADDISON.

THE numerous miſeries of human life have extorted in all ages an univerſal complaint. The wiſeſt of men terminated all his experiments in ſearch of happineſs, by the mournful confeſſion, that "all is vanity;" and the ancient patriarchs lamented, that "the days of "their pilgrimage were few and evil."

There is, indeed, no topic on which it is more ſuperfluous to accumulate authorities, nor any aſſertion of which our own eyes will more eaſily diſcover, or our ſenſations more frequently impreſs the truth, than, that miſery is the lot of man, that our preſent ſtate is a ſtate of danger and infelicity.

When we take the moſt diſtant proſpect of life, what does it preſent us but a chaos of unhappineſs, a confuſed and tumultuous ſcene of labour and conteſt, diſappointment and defeat? If we view paſt ages in the reflection

reflection of hiſtory, what do they offer to our meditation but crimes and calamities? One year is diſtinguiſhed by a famine, another by an earthquake; kingdoms are made deſolate, ſometimes by wars, and ſometimes by peſtilence; the peace of the world is interrupted at one time by the caprices of a tyrant, at another by the rage of a conqueror. The memory is ſtored only with viciſſitudes of evil; and the happineſs, ſuch as it is, of one part of mankind, is found to ariſe commonly from ſanguinary ſucceſs, from victories which confer upon them the power, not ſo much of improving life by any new enjoyment, as of inflicting miſery on others, and gratifying their own pride by comparative greatneſs.

But by him that examines life with a more cloſe attention, the happineſs of the world will be found ſtill leſs than it appears. In ſome intervals of public proſperity, or to uſe terms more proper, in ſome interminſions of calamity, a general diffuſion of happineſs may ſeem to overſpread a people; all is triumph and exultation, jollity and plenty; there are no public fears and dangers, and "no complainings in the "ſtreets." But the condition of individuals is very little mended by this general calm: pain and malice and diſcontent ſtill continue their havock; the ſilent depradation goes inceſſantly forward; and the grave continues to be filled by the victims of ſorrow.

He that enters a gay aſſembly, beholds the cheerfulneſs diſplayed in every countenance, and finds all ſitting vacant and diſengaged, with no other attention than to give or to receive pleaſure; would naturally imagine, that he had reached at laſt the metropolis of felicity, the place ſacred to gladneſs of heart, from

whence all fear and anxiety were irreverſibly excluded. Such, indeed, we may often find to be the opinion of thoſe, who from a lower ſtation look up to the pomp and gaiety which they cannot reach: but who is there of thoſe who frequent thoſe luxurious aſſemblies, that will not confeſs his own uneaſineſs, or cannot recount the vexations and diſtreſſes that prey upon the lives of his gay companions?

The world, in its beſt ſtate, is nothing more than a larger aſſembly of beings, combining to counterfeit happineſs which they do not feel, employing every art and contrivance to embelliſh life, and to hide their real condition from the eyes of one another.

The ſpecies of happineſs moſt obvious to the obſervation of others is that which depends upon the goods of fortune; yet even this is often fictitious. There is in the world more poverty than is generally imagined; not only becauſe many whoſe poſſeſſions are large have deſires ſtill larger, and many meaſure their wants by the gratifications which others enjoy; but great numbers are preſſed by real neceſſities which it is their chief ambition to conceal, and are forced to purchaſe the appearance of competence and cheerfulneſs at the expence of many comforts and conveniencies of life.

Many, however, are confeſſedly rich, and many more are ſufficiently removed from all danger of real poverty: but it has been long ago remarked, that money cannot purchaſe quiet; the higheſt of mankind can promiſe themſelves no exemption from that diſcord or ſuſpicion, by which the ſweetneſs of domeſtic retirement is deſtroyed; and muſt always be even more expoſed, in the ſame degree as they are elevated

above others, to the treachery of dependents, the calumny of defamers, and the violence of opponents.

Affliction is inſeparable from our preſent ſtate; it adheres to all the inhabitants of this world in different proportions indeed, but with an allotment which ſeems very little regulated by our own conduct. It has been the boaſt of ſome ſwelling moraliſts, that every man's fortune was in his own power, that prudence ſupplied the place of all other divinities, and that happineſs is the unfailing conſequence of virtue. But, ſurely, the quiver of Omnipotence is ſtored with arrows, againſt which the ſhield of human virtue, however adamantine it has been boaſted, is held up in vain: we do not always ſuffer by our crimes; we are not always protected by our innocence.

A Good Man is by no means exempt from the danger of ſuffering by the crimes of others; even his goodneſs may raiſe him enemies of implacable malice and reſtleſs perſeverance: the Good Man has never been warranted by Heaven from the treachery of friends, the diſobedience of children, or the diſhoneſty of a wife; he may ſee his cares made uſeleſs by profuſion, his inſtructions defeated by perverſeneſs, and his kindneſs rejected by ingratitude; he may languiſh under the infamy of falſe accuſations, or periſh reproachfully by an unjuſt ſentence.

A Good Man is ſubject, like other mortals, to all the influences of natural evil; his harveſt is not ſpared by the tempeſt, nor his cattle by the murrain; his houſe flames like others in a conflagration; nor have his ſhips any peculiar power of reſiſting hurricanes: his mind, however elevated, inhabits a body ſubject to innumerable caſualties, of which he muſt always ſhare

the dangers and the pains; he bears about him the ſeeds of diſeaſe, and may linger away a great part of his life under the tortures of the gout or ſtone; at one time groaning with inſufferable anguiſh, at another diſſolved in liſtleſſneſs and langour.

From this general and indiſcriminate diſtribution of miſery, the moraliſts have always derived one of their ſtrongeſt moral arguments for a future ſtate; for ſince the common events of the preſent life happen alike to the good and bad, it follows from the juſtice of the ſupreme Being, that there muſt be another ſtate of exiſtence, in which a juſt retribution ſhall be made, and every man ſhall be happy and miſerable according to his works.

The miſeries of life may, perhaps, afford ſome proof of a future ſtate, compared as well with the mercy as the juſtice of God. It is ſcarcely to be imagined, that Infinite Benevolence would create a being capable of enjoying ſo much more than is here to be enjoyed, and qualified by nature to prolong pain by remembrance, and anticipate it by terror, if he was not deſigned for ſomething nobler and better than a ſtate, in which many of his faculties can ſerve only for his torment; in which he is to be importuned by deſires that never can be ſatisfied, to feel many evils which he had no power to avoid, and to fear many which he ſhall never feel: there will ſurely come a time, when every capacity of happineſs ſhall be filled, and none ſhall be wretched but by his own fault.

In the mean time, it is by affliction chiefly that the heart of man is purified, and that the thoughts are fixed upon a better ſtate. Proſperity, allayed and imperfect as it is, has power to intoxicate the imagination,

tion, to fix the mind upon the preſent ſcene, to produce confidence and elation, and to make him who enjoys affluence and honours forget the hand by which they were beſtowed. It is ſeldom that we are otherwiſe, than by affliction, awakened to a ſenſe of our own imbecillity, or taught to know how little all our acquiſitions can conduce to ſafety or to quiet; and how juſtly we may aſcribe to the ſuperintendence of a Higher Power, thoſe bleſſings which in the wantonneſs of ſucceſs we conſidered as the attainments of our policy or courage.

Nothing confers ſo much ability to reſiſt the temptations that perpetually ſurround us, as an habitual conſideration of the ſhortneſs of life, and the uncertainty of thoſe pleaſures that ſolicit our purſuit; and this conſideration can be inculcated only by affliction. "O death! how bitter is the remembrance of thee, "to a man that lives at eaſe in his poſſeſſions." If our preſent ſtate were one continued ſucceſſion of delights, or one uniform flow of calmneſs and tranquillity, we ſhould never willingly think upon its end; death would then ſurely ſurpriſe us as "a thief in the "night;" and our taſk of duty would remain unfiniſhed, till "the night came when no man can work."

While affliction thus prepares us for felicity, we may conſole ourſelves under its preſſures, by remembering, that they are no particular marks of Divine diſpleaſure; ſince all the diſtreſſes of perſecution have been ſuffered by thoſe "of whom the world was not "worthy;" and the Redeemer of mankind himſelf was "a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief."

T

No. CXXI. Tueſday, January 1. 1754.

Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris
Italiam fato profugus, Lavinaque venit
Litora. Multum ille et terris jactatus et alto;

Multa quoque et bello paſſus.——

VIRG.

Arms and the man I ſing, who forced by fate.

Expell'd and exil'd, left the Trojan ſhore.
Long labours, both by ſea and land, he bore,
And in the doubtful war.

DRYDEN.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR,

A FEW nights ago, after I came home from the tavern, I took up the firſt volume of your papers, which at preſent is depoſited near the elbow chair in my chamber, and happened to read the fifth number, which

which contains the narrative of a Flea. After I fell aſleep, I imagined the book ſtill to lie open before me, and that at the bottom of the page I ſaw not a Flea but a Louſe, who addreſſed me with ſuch ſolemnity of accent, that it brought to my mind ſome orations which I had formerly heard in St. Stephen's chapel.

Sir, ſaid he, it has been remarked by thoſe, who have enriched themſelves from the mines of knowledge by deep reſearches and laborious ſtudy, that ſublunary beings are all mortal, and that life is a ſtate of perpetual peril and inquietude: ſuch, indeed, hitherto has been my experience; and yet I do not remember, that I have brought calamity upon myſelf by any uncommon deviations either from virtue or prudence.

I was hatched in the head of a boy about eight years old, who was placed under the care of a pariſh nurſe, and educated at the charity ſchool. In this place, as in the populous city, I ſoon obtained a ſettlement; and as our ſtate of adoleſcence is ſhort, had in a few months a numerous family. This indeed was the happieſt period of my life; I ſuffered little apprehenſion from the comb or the razor, and foreſaw no misfortune, except that our country ſhould be overſtocked, and we ſhould be compelled to wander, like the barbarians of the north, in ſearch of another. But it happened that the lord of our ſoil, in an evil hour, went with ſome of his companions to Highgate. Juſt at the top of the hill was a ſtage and a mountebank, where ſeveral feats of wit and humour were performed by a gentleman with a gridiron upon his back, who aſſiſted the doctor in his vocation. We were preſently in the midſt of the crowd and ſoon after upon the ſtage; which the boy was perſuaded to aſcend, that

by a ſudden ſtroke of conjuration, a great quantity of gold might be conveyed under his hat. Under his hat, however, the dextrous but miſchievous operator, having imperceptibly conveyed a rotten egg, clapped his hand ſmartly upon it, and ſhewed the aurum potabile running down on each ſide, to the unſpeakable delight of the beholders, but to the great diſappointment of the boy, and the total ruin of our community.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the confuſion and diſtreſs which this accident inſtantly produced among us: we were at once buried in a quag, intolerably noiſome, and inſuperably viſcid: thoſe who had been overturned in its paſſage, found it impoſſible to recover their ſituation; and the few who happening to lie near the borders of the ſuffuſion, had with the utmoſt efforts of their ſtrength crawled to thoſe parts which it had not reached, laboured in vain to free themſelves from ſhackles, which every moment became more ſtrong as the ſubſtance which formed them grew more hard, and threatened in a ſhort time totally to deprive them of all power of motion. I was myſelf among this number, and cannot even now recollect my ſituation without ſhuddering at my danger. In the mean time the candidate for enchanted gold, who in the ſearch of pleaſure had found only dirt and hunger, wearineſs and diſappointment, reflecting that his ſtolen holiday was at an end, returned forlorn and diſconſolate to his nurſe. The noſe of this good woman was ſoon offended by an unſavoury ſmell, and it was not long before ſhe diſcovered whence it proceeded. A few queſtions, and a good thump on the back, brought the whole ſecret to light, and the delinquent, that he might be *at once* purified and puniſhed, was carried to the next

pump,

pump, where his head was held under the ſpout till he had received the diſcipline of a pickpocket. He was indeed very near being drowned; but his ſufferings were nothing in compariſon of ours. We were overwhelmed with a ſecond inundation; the cataracts, which burſt upon us with a noiſe tenfold more dreadful than thunder, ſwept us by hundreds before them, and the few that remained would not have had ſtrength to keep their hold againſt the impetuoſity of the torrent, if it had continued a few minutes longer. I was ſtill among thoſe that eſcaped; and after we had a little recovered from our fright, we found that if we had loſt our friends, we were releaſed from the viſcous durance which our own ſtrength could never have broken. We were alſo delivered from the dread of an emigration and a famine; and taking comfort in theſe reflections, we were enabled to reconcile ourſelves, without murmuring, to the fate of thoſe who had periſhed.

But the ſeries of misfortunes which I have been doomed to ſuffer, without reſpite, was now begun. The next day was Holy Thurſday; and the ſtupendous being, who, without labour, carried the ruins of our ſtate in proceſſion to the bounds of his pariſh, thought fit to break his wand into a cudgel as ſoon as he came home. This he was impatient to uſe; and in an engagement with an adverſary, who had armed himſelf with the like weapon, he received a ſtroke upon his head, by which my favourite wife and three children, the whole remains of my family, were cruſhed to atoms in a moment. I was myſelf ſo near as to be thrown down by the concuſſion of the blow; and the boy im-

mediately ſcratching his head to alleviate the ſmart, was within a hair of deſtroying me with his nail.

I was ſo terrified at this accident that I crept down to the nape of his neck, where I continued all the reſt of the day; and at night, when he retired to eat his cruſt of bread in the chimney-corner, I concluded that I ſhould at leaſt be ſafe till the morning, and therefore began my repaſt, which the dangers and misfortunes of the day had prevented. Whether having long faſted my bite was more keen than uſual, or whether I had made my attack in a more ſenſible part I cannot tell; but the boy ſuddenly thruſt up his fingers with ſo much ſpeed and dexterity, that he laid hold of me, and aimed with all his force to throw me into the fire; in this ſavage attempt he would certainly have ſucceeded, if I had not ſtuck between his finger and his nail, and fell ſhort upon ſome linen that was hanging to dry.

The woman, who took in waſhing, was employed by a laundreſs of ſome diſtinction; and it happened that I had fallen on the ſhift ſleeve of a celebrated toaſt, who frequently made her appearance at court. I concealed myſelf with great caution in the plaits, and the next night had the honour to accompany her into the drawing-room, where ſhe was ſurrounded by rival beauties, from whom ſhe attracted every eye, and ſtood with the utmoſt compoſure of mind and countenance in the centre of admiration and deſire. In this ſituation I became impatient of confinement, and after ſeveral efforts made my way out by her tucker, hoping to have paſſed on under her handkerchief to her head; but in this hope I was diſappointed, for handkerchief ſhe had none. I was not, however, willing to go back,

and

and as my ſtation was the principal object of the whole circle, I was ſoon diſcovered by thoſe who ſtood near. They gazed at me with eager attention, and ſometimes turned towards each other with very intelligent looks; but of this the lady took no notice, as it was the common effect of that profuſion of beauty which ſhe had been uſed to pour upon every eye; the emotion, however, at length increaſed till ſhe obſerved it, and glancing her eye downward with a ſecret exultation, ſhe diſcovered the cauſe: pride inſtantly covered thoſe cheeks with bluſhes which modeſty had forſaken; and as I was now become ſenſible of my danger, I was haſting to retreat. At this inſtant a young nobleman, who perceived that the lady was become ſenſible of her diſgrace, and who, perhaps, thought that it might be deemed an indecorum to approach the place where I ſtood with his hand in a public aſſembly, ſtooped down, and holding up his hand to his face, directed ſo violent a blaſt towards me, from his mouth, that I vaniſhed before it like an atom in a whirlwind: and the next moment found myſelf in the toupee of a battered beau, whoſe attention was engroſſed by the widow of a rich citizen, with whoſe plumb he hoped to pay his debts and procure a new miſtreſs.

In this place the hair was ſo thin that it ſcarce afforded me ſhelter, except a ſingle row of curls on each ſide, where the powder and greaſe were inſuperable obſtacles to my progreſs: here, however, I continued near a week, but it was in every reſpect a dreadful ſituation. I lived in perpetual ſolicitude and danger, ſecluded from my ſpecies, and expoſed to the curſed claws of the valet, who perſecuted me every morning and every night. In the morning, it was

with

with the utmoſt difficulty that I eſcaped from being kneaded up in a lump of pomatum, or ſqueezed to death between the burning forceps of a criſping iron; and at night, after I had with the utmoſt vigilance and dexterity evaded the comb, I was ſtill liable to be thruſt through the body with a pin.

I frequently meditated my eſcape, and formed many projects to effect it, which I afterwards abandoned either as dangerous or impracticable. I obſerved that the valet had a much better head of hair than his maſter, and that he ſometimes wore the ſame bag; into the bag, therefore, one evening, I deſcended with great circumſpection, and was removed with it: nor was it long before my utmoſt expectations were anſwered, for the valet tied on my dormitory to his own hair the very next morning, and I gained a new ſettlement.

But the bag was not the only part of the maſter's dreſs which was occaſionally appropriated by the ſervant, who being ſoon after my exploit detected in wearing a laced frock before it had been left off, was turned away at a minute's warning, and deſpairing to obtain a character, returned to the occupation in which he had been bred, and became journeyman to a barber in the city, who upon ſeeing a ſpecimen of his ſkill to dreſs hair a-la-mode de la cour, was willing to receive him without a ſcrupulous examination of his morals.

This change in the ſituation of my patron was a great advantage to me; for I began to have more company and leſs diſturbance. But among other perſons whom he attended every morning to ſhave, was an elderly gentleman of great repute for natural knowledge, a fellow of many foreign ſocieties, and a profound

found adept in experimental philoſophy. This gentleman, having conceived a deſign to repeat Leuenhoek's experiments upon the increaſe of our ſpecies, inquired of the proprietor of my dwelling if he could help him to a ſubject. The man was at firſt ſtartled at the queſtion; but it was no ſooner comprehended than he pulled out an ivory comb, and produced myſelf and two aſſociates, one of whom died ſoon after the hurt he received.

The ſage received us with thanks, and very carefully conveyed us into his ſtocking, where, though it was not a ſituation perfectly agreeable to our nature, we produced a numerous progeny. Here, however, I ſuffered new calamity, and was expoſed to new danger. The philoſopher, whom a ſedentary and recluſe life had rendered extremely ſuſceptible of cold, would often ſit with his ſhins ſo near the fire, that we were almoſt ſcorched to death before we could get round to the calf for ſhelter. He was alſo ſubject to frequent abſtractions of mind; and at theſe times many of us have been miſerably deſtroyed by his broth or his tea, which he would hold ſo much on one ſide that it would run over the veſſel, and overflow us with a ſcalding deluge from his knee to his ancle: nor was this all; for when he felt the ſmart he would rub the part with his hand, without reflecting upon his nurſery, till he had cruſhed great part of thoſe who had eſcaped. Still, however, it was my fortune to ſurvive for new adventures.

The philoſopher, among other viſitants whoſe curioſity he was pleaſed to gratify, was ſometimes favoured with the company of ladies: for the entertainment of a lady it was my misfortune to be one morn-

ing

ing taken from my family when I leaſt ſuſpected it, and ſecured in the apparatus of a ſolar microſcope. After I had contributed to their aſtoniſhment and diverſion near an hour, I was left with the utmoſt inhumanity and ingratitude to periſh of hunger, immured between the two pieces of iſinglaſs through which I had been exhibited. In this condition I remained three days and three nights; and ſhould certainly have periſhed in the fourth, if a boy about ſeven years old, who was careleſsly left alone in the room, had not poked his finger through the hole in which I was confined, and once more ſet me at liberty. I was, however, extremely weak, and the window being open I was blown into the ſtreet, and fell on the uncovered perriwig of a doctor of phyſic, who had juſt alighted to viſit a patient. This was the firſt time I had ever entered a perriwig, a ſituation which I ſcarce leſs deprecate than the microſcope: I found it a deſolate wilderneſs, without inhabitants and without bounds. I continued to traverſe it with incredible labour, but I knew not in what direction, and deſpaired of being ever reſtored either to food or reſt. My ſpirits were at length exhauſted, my gripe relaxed, and I fell almoſt in a ſtate of inſenſibility from the verge of the labyrinth in which I had been bewildered, into the head of a patient in the hoſpital, over whom, after my fall, I could juſt perceive the doctor leaning to look at his tongue.

By the warmth and nouriſhment which this place afforded me I ſoon revived. I rejoiced at my deliverance, and thought I had nothing to fear but the death of the patient in whoſe head I had taken ſhelter.

I was, however, ſoon convinced of my miſtake; for among other patients in the ſame ward was a child about ſix years old, who having been put in for a rupture, had fallen into a jaundice: for this diſeaſe the nurſe, in the abſence of the phyſician, preſcribed a certain number of my ſpecies to be adminiſtered alive in a ſpoonful of milk. A collection was immediately made, and I was numbered among the unhappy victims which ignorance and inhumanity had thus devoted to deſtruction: I was immerged in the potion, and ſaw myſelf approach the horrid jaws that I expected would the next moment cloſe over me; not but that, in this dreadful moment, I had ſome languid hope of paſſing the gulf unhurt, and finding a ſettlement at the bottom. My fate, however, was otherwiſe determined: for the child, in a fit of forwardneſs and anger, daſhed the ſpoon out of the hand of the nurſe; and after incredible fatigue I recovered the ſtation to which I had deſcended from the doctor's wig.

I was once more congratulating myſelf on an eſcape almoſt miraculous, when I was alarmed by the appearance of a barber, with all the dreadful apparatus of his trade. I ſoon found that the perſon whoſe head I had choſen for an aſylum was become delirious, and that the hair was by the phyſician's order to be removed for a bliſter.

Here my courage totally failed, and all my hopes forſook me. It happened, however, that though I was entangled in the ſuds, yet I was depoſited unhurt upon the operator's ſhaving cloth; from whence, as he was ſhaving you this night, I gained your ſhoulder, and have this moment crawled out from the plaits of your ſtock, which you have juſt taken off and laid upon

this

this table. Whether this event be fortunate or unfortunate time only can diſcover: but I ſtill hope to find ſome dwelling, where no comb ſhall ever enter, and no nails ſhall ever ſcratch; which neither pincers nor razor ſhall approach; where I ſhall paſs the remainder of my life in perfect ſecurity and repoſe, amidſt the ſmiles of ſociety and the profuſion of plenty.

At this hope ſo extravagant and ridiculous, uttered with ſuch ſolemnity of diction and manner, I burſt into a fit of immoderate laughter that awaked me: but my mirth was inſtantly repreſſed by reflecting, that the life of man is not leſs expoſed to evil; and that all his expectations of ſecurity and happineſs in temporal poſſeſſions are equally chimerical and abſurd.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

DORMITOR.

No. CXXII. Saturday, January 5. 1754.

Telephus et Peleus, cùm pauper et exul uterque,
Projicit ampullas, et ſeſquipedalia verba,
Si curat cor ſpectantis tetigiſſe querelâ.

Hor.

Tragedians too lay by their ſtate to grieve:
Peleus and Telephus, exil'd and poor,
Forget their ſwelling and gigantic words:
He that wou'd have ſpectators ſhare his grief,
Muſt write not only well but movingly.

Roscommon.

MADNESS being occaſioned by a cloſe and continued attention of the mind to a ſingle object, Shakeſpeare judiciouſly repreſents the reſignation of his crown to daughters ſo cruel and unnatural, as the particular idea which has brought on the diſtraction of Lear, and which perpetually recurs to his imagination, and mixes itſelf with all his ramblings. Full of this idea, therefore, he breaks out abruptly in the fourth act: "No, "they cannot touch me for coining: I am the king "himſelf."

" himſelf." He believes himſelf to be raiſing recruits, and cenſures the inability and unſkilfulneſs of ſome of his ſoldiers: " There's your preſs money. " That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper: " draw me a clothier's yard. Look, look, a mouſe! " Peace, peace: this piece of toaſted cheeſe will do " it." The art of our poet is tranſcendent in thus making a paſſage that even borders on burleſque, ſtrongly expreſſive of the madneſs he is painting. Lear ſuddenly thinks himſelf in the field; " there's my " gauntlet—I'll prove it on a giant:" and that he has ſhot his arrow ſucceſsfully! " O well flown barb! " i' th' clout, i' th' clout: hewgh! give the word." He then recollects the falſehood and cruelty of his daughters, and breaks out in ſome pathetic reflections on his old age, and on the tempeſt to which he was ſo lately expoſed: " Ha! Gonerill, ha! Regan! They " flattered me like a dog, and told me I had white " hairs on my beard, ere the black one's were there. " They ſay, ay and no, to every thing that I ſaid— " ay and no too, was no good divinity. When the " rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make " me chatter; when the thunder would not peace " at my bidding; there I found 'm, there I ſmelt 'm " out. Go to, they're not men of their words; they " told me I was every thing: 'tis a lie, I am not " ague-proof." The impotence of royalty to exempt its poſſeſſor, more than the meaneſt ſubject, from ſuffering natural evils is here finely hinted at.

His friend and adherent Glo'ſter, having been lately deprived of ſight, inquires if the voice he hears is not the voice of the king; Lear inſtantly catches the word, and replies with great quickneſs,

—Ay,

——— Ay, every inch a king:
When I do ſtare, ſee how the ſubject quakes!
I pardon that man's life. What was thy cauſe?
Adultery? no thou ſhalt not die: die for adultery!

He then makes ſome very ſevere reflections on the hypocriſy of lewd and abandoned women, and adds, "Fie, fie, fie; pah, pah: give me an ounce of civet, "good apothecary, to ſweeten my imagination:" and as every object ſeems to be preſent to the eyes of the lunatic, he thinks he pays for the drug: "there's "money for thee!" Very ſtrong and lively alſo is the imagery in a ſucceeding ſpeech, where he thinks himſelf viewing his ſubjects puniſhed by the proper officer:

Thou raſcal bedel, hold thy bloody hand:
Why doſt thou laſh that whore? ſtrip thy own back;
Thou hotly luſt'ſt to uſe her in that kind
For which thou whip'ſt her!

This circumſtance leads him to reflect on the efficacy of rank and power, to conceal and palliate profligacy and injuſtice; and this fine ſatire is couched in two different metaphors, that are carried on with much propriety and elegance:

Through tatter'd clothes ſmall vices do appear;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate ſin with gold,
And the ſtrong lance of juſtice hurtleſs breaks;
Arm it in rags, a pigmy ſtraw doth pierce it.

We

We are moved to find that Lear has ſome faint knowledge of his old and faithful courtier.

If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough; thy name is Glo'ſter:

The advice he then gives him is very affecting:

Thou muſt be patient; we came crying hither:
Thou know'ſt, the firſt time that we ſmell the air
We wawle and cry——
When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great ſtage of fools!

This tender complaint of the miſeries of human life bears ſo exact a reſemblance with the following paſſage of Lucretius, that I cannot forbear tranſcribing it:

Vagitûque locum lugubri complet, ut equum eſt,
Cui tantum in vitâ reſtet tranſire malorum.

Then with diſtreſsful cries he fills the room,
Too ſure preſages of his future doom.

DRYDEN.

It is not to be imagined that our author copied from the Roman; on ſuch a ſubject it is almoſt impoſſible but that two perſons of genius and ſenſibility muſt feel and think alike. Lear drops his moralities and meditates revenge:

It

It were a delicate ſtratagem to ſhoe
A troop of horſe with felt. I'll put't in proof;
And when I've ſtol'n upon theſe ſons-in-law,
Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.

The expedient is well ſuited to the character of a lunatic, and the frequent repetitions of the word "kill," forcibly repreſent his rage and deſire of revenge, and muſt affect an intelligent audience at once with pity and terror. At this inſtant Cordelia ſends one of her attendants to protect her father from the danger with which he is threatened by her ſiſters: the wretched king is ſo accuſtomed to miſery, and ſo hopeleſs of ſuccour, that when the meſſenger offers to lead him out, he imagines himſelf taken captive and mortally wounded:

No reſcue? what! a priſoner? I am e'en
The nat'ral foal of fortune: uſe me well,
You ſhall have ranſom. Let me have ſurgeons;
I am cut to the brain.——

Cordelia at length arrives; an opiate is adminiſtered to the king, to calm the agonies and agitations of his mind; and a moſt intereſting interview enſues between this daughter that was ſo unjuſtly ſuſpected of diſaffection, and the raſh and miſtaken father. Lear, during his ſlumber, has been arrayed in regal apparel, and is brought upon the ſtage in a chair, not recovered from his trance. I know not a ſpeech more truly pathetic than that of Cordelia when ſhe firſt ſees him:

Had

Had you not been their father, theſe white flakes
Did challenge pity of them. Was this a face
To be expos'd againſt the warring winds?

The dreadfulneſs of that night is expreſſed by a circumſtance of great humanity; for which kind of ſtrokes Shakeſpeare is as eminent as for his poetry:

My very enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, ſhould have ſtood that night
Againſt my fire. And waſt thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with ſwine, and rogues forlorn,
In ſhort and muſty ſtraw.——

Lear begins to awake; but his imagination is ſtill diſtempered, and his pain exquiſite;

You do me wrong to take me out o'th' grave.
Thou art a ſoul in bliſs; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do ſcald like molten lead——

When Cordelia in great affliction aſks him if he knows her, he replies,

You are a ſpirit, I know; when did you die?

This reply heightens her diſtreſs; but his ſenſibility beginning to return, ſhe kneels to him, and begs his benediction. I hope I have no readers that can peruſe his anſwer without tears:

——Pray do not mock me:
I am a very fooliſh, fond old man,

Fourſcore

Fourſcore and upward; and to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I ſhould know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful: for I'm mainly ignorant
What place this is.—Do not laugh at me;
For as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.——

The humility, calmneſs, and ſedateneſs of this ſpeech, oppoſed to the former rage and indignation of Lear, is finely calculated to excite commiſeration. Struck with the remembrance of the injurious ſuſpicion he had cheriſhed againſt this favourite and fond daughter, the poor old man intreats her, "not to weep," and tells her that "if ſhe has prepared poiſon for him, he is ready "to drink it; for I know," ſays he, "you do not, you "cannot love me, after my cruel uſage of you: your "ſiſters have done me much wrong, of which I have "ſome faint remembrance: you have ſome cauſe to "hate me, they have none." Being told that he is not in France, but in his own kingdom, he anſwers haſtily, and in connection with that leading idea which I have before inſiſted on, "Do not abuſe me"—and adds, with a meekneſs and contrition that are very pathétic, "Pray now forget and forgive; I am old and "fooliſh."

Cordelia is at laſt ſlain: the lamentations of Lear are extremely tender and affecting; and this accident is ſo ſevere and intolerable, that it again deprived him of his intellect, which ſeemed to be returning.

His laſt ſpeech, as he ſurveys the body, conſiſts of ſuch ſimple reflections as nature and ſorrow dictate:

Why ſhould a dog, a horſe, a rat have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more;
Never, never, never, never, never!——

The heaving and ſwelling of his heart is deſcribed by a moſt expreſſive circumſtance:

Pray you undo this button. Thank you, Sir,
Do you ſee this? Look on her, look on her lips:
Look there, look there—— [Dies.

I ſhall tranſiently obſerve, in concluſion of theſe remarks, that this drama is chargeable with conſiderable imperfections. The plot of Edmund againſt his brother, which diſtracts the attention, and deſtroys the unity of the fable: the cruel and horrid extinction of Gloſter's eyes, which ought not to be exhibited on the ſtage; the utter improbability of Gloſter's imagining, though blind, that he had leaped down Dover cliff; and ſome paſſages that are too turged and full of ſtrained metaphors; are faults which the warmeſt admirers of Shakeſpeare will find it difficult to excuſe. I know not, alſo, whether the cruelty of the daughters is not painted with circumſtances too ſavage and unnatural; for it is not ſufficient to ſay, that this monſtrous barbarity is founded on hiſtorical truth, if we recollect the juſt obſervation of Boileau,

Le vray peut quelquefois n'etre pas vraiſemblable.
Some truths may be too ſtrong to be believed.

SOMES.

No.

No. CXXIII. Tueſday, *January* 8. 1754.

——*Jam protervâ*
Fronte petet Lalage maritum. Hor.

The maid whom now you court in vain,
Will quickly run in queſt of man.

I HAVE before remarked, that "to abſtain from the "appearance of evil," is a precept in that law which has every characteriſtic of Divinity; and I have in more than one of theſe papers, endeavoured to inforce the practice of it, by an illuſtration of its excellence and importance.

Circumſtances have been admitted as evidences of guilt, even when death has been the conſequence of conviction; and a conduct by which evil is ſtrongly implied, is little leſs pernicious than that by which it is expreſſed. With reſpect to ſociety, as far as it can be influenced by example, the effect of both is the ſame; for every man encourages the practice of that vice

which he commits in appearance, though he avoids it in fact: and with respect to the individual, as the esteem of the world is a motive to virtue only less powerful than the approbation of conscience, he who knows that he is already degraded by the imputation of guilt, will find himself half disarmed when he is assailed by temptation: and as he will have less to lose, he will, indeed, be less disposed to resist. Of the sex, whose levity is most likely to provoke censure, it is eminently true, that the loss of character by imprudence frequently induces the loss of virtue: the ladies therefore, should be proportionably circumspect; as to those, in whom folly is most likely to terminate in guilt, it is certainly of most importance to be wise.

This subject has irresistibly obtruded itself upon my mind in the silent hour of meditation, because, as often as I have reviewed the scenes in which I have mixed among the busy and the gay, I have observed that a depravity of manners, a licentious extravagance of dress and behaviour, are become almost universal: virtue seems ambitious of a resemblance to vice, as vice glories in the deformities which she has been used to hide.

A decent timidity, and modest reserve, have been always considered as auxiliaries to beauty; but an air of dissolute boldness is now affected by all who would be thought graceful or polite: chastity, which used to be discovered in every gesture and every look, is now retired to the breast, and is found only by those who intend its destruction; as a general, when the town is surrendered, retreats to the citadel, which is always less capable of defence, when the outworks are possessed by the enemy.

There is now little apparent difference between the virgin and the proſtitute: if they are not otherwiſe known, they may ſhare the box and the drawing-room without diſtinction. The ſame faſhion which takes away the veil of modeſty, will neceſſarily conceal lewdneſs; and honour and ſhame will loſe their influence, becauſe they will no longer diſtinguiſh virtue from vice. General cuſtom, perhaps, may be thought an effectual ſecurity againſt general cenſure; but it will not always lull the ſuſpicions of jealouſy; nor can it familiarize any beauty without deſtroying its influence, or diminiſh the prerogatives of a huſband without weakening his attachment to his wife.

The exceſs of every mode may be declined without remarkable ſingularity; and the ladies, who ſhould even dare to be ſingular in the preſent defection of taſte, would proportionably increaſe their power and ſecure their happineſs.

I know that in the vanity and the preſumption of youth, it is common to allege the conſciouſneſs of innocence, as a reaſon for the contempt of cenſure; and a licence, not only for every freedom, but for every favour except the laſt. This confidence can, perhaps, only be repreſſed by a ſenſe of danger: and as the perſons whom I wiſh to warn, are moſt impatient of declamation, and moſt ſuſceptible of pity, I will addreſs them in a ſtory; and I hope the events will not only illuſtrate but impreſs the precept which they contain.

Flavilla, juſt as ſhe had entered her fourteenth year, was left an orphan to the care of her mother, in ſuch circumſtances as diſappointed all the hopes which her education had encouraged. Her father, who lived in great elegance upon the ſalary of a place at court, died

ſuddenly, without having made any proviſion for his family, except an annuity of one hundred pounds, which he had purchaſed for his wife with part of her marriage portion; nor was he poſſeſſed of any property, except the furniture of a large houſe in one of the new ſquares, an equipage, a few jewels, and ſome plate.

The greater part of the furniture and the equipage were ſold to pay his debts; the jewels, which were not of great value, and ſome uſeful pieces of the plate, were reſerved; and Flavilla removed with her mother into lodgings.

But notwithſtanding this change in their circumſtances, they did not immediately loſe their rank. They were ſtill viſited by a numerous and polite acquaintance; and though ſome gratified their pride by aſſuming the appearance of pity, and rather inſulted than alleviated their diſtreſs by the whine of condolance, and minute compariſon of what they had loſt with what they poſſeſſed; yet from others they were continually receiving preſents, which ſtill enabled them to live with a genteel frugality: they were ſtill conſidered as people of faſhion, and treated by thoſe of a lower claſs with diſtant reſpect.

Flavilla thus continued to move in a ſphere to which ſhe had no claim; ſhe was perpetually ſurrounded with elegance and ſplendor, which the caprice of others, like the rod of an enchanter, could diſſipate in a moment, and leave her to regret the loſs of enjoyments, which ſhe could neither hope to obtain nor ceaſe to deſire. Of this, however, Flavilla had no dread. She was remarkably tall for her age, and was celebrated not only for her beauty but her wit: theſe qualifications ſhe conſidered, not only as ſecuring whatever ſhe

enjoyed

enjoyed by the favour of others, but as a pledge of poſſeſſing them in her own right by an advantageous marriage. Thus the viſion that danced before her, derived ſtability from the very vanity which it flattered: and ſhe had as little apprehenſion of diſtreſs, as diffidence of her own power to pleaſe.

There was a faſhionable levity in her carriage and diſcourſe, which her mother, who knew the danger of her ſituation, laboured to reſtrain, ſometimes with anger, ſometimes with tears, but always without ſucceſs. Flavilla was ever ready to anſwer, that ſhe neither did or ſaid any thing of which ſhe had reaſon to be aſhamed; and therefore did not know why ſhe ſhould be reſtrained, except in mere courteſy to envy, whom it was an honour to provoke, or to ſlander, whom it was a diſgrace to fear. In proportion as Flavilla was more flattered and careſſed, the influence of her mother became leſs: and though ſhe always treated her with reſpect, from a point of good breeding, yet ſhe ſecretly deſpiſed her maxims and applauded her own conduct.

Flavilla at eighteen was a celebrated toaſt; and among other gay viſitants who frequented her tea-table, was Clodio, a young baronet, who had juſt taken poſſeſſion of his title and eſtate. There were many particulars in Clodio's behaviour, which encouraged Flavilla to hope that ſhe ſhould obtain him for a huſband: but ſhe ſuffered his aſſiduities with ſuch apparent pleaſure, and his familiarites with ſo little reſerve, that he ſoon ventured to diſcloſe his intention, and make her what he thought a very genteel propoſal of another kind: but whatever were the artifices with which it was introduced, or the terms in which it was made, Flavilla rejected it with the utmoſt indignation

and diſdain. Clodio, who, notwithſtanding his youth, had long known and often practiſed the arts of ſeduction, gave way to the ſtorm, threw himſelf at her feet, imputed his offence to the phrenzy of his paſſion, flattered her pride by the moſt abject ſubmiſſion and extravagant praiſe, entreated her pardon, aggravated his crime, but made no mention of atonement by marriage. This particular, which Flavilla did not fail to remark, ought to have determined her to admit him no more: but her vanity and her ambition were ſtill predominant; ſhe ſtill hoped to ſucceed in her project. Clodio's offence was tacitly forgiven, his viſits were permitted, his familiarities were again ſuffered, and his hopes revived. He had long entertained an opinion that ſhe loved him, in which, however, it is probable, that his own vanity and and her indiſcretion concurred to deceive him; but this opinion, though it implied the ſtrongeſt obligation to treat her with generoſity and tenderneſs, only determined him again to attempt her ruin, as it encouraged him with a probability of ſucceſs. Having, therefore, reſolved to obtain her as a miſtreſs, or at once to give her up, he thought he had little more to do, than to convince her that he had taken ſuch a reſolution, juſtify it by ſome plauſible ſophiſtry, and give her ſome time to deliberate upon a final determination. With this view, he went a ſhort journey into the country; having put a letter into her hand at parting, in which he acquainted her, "That he had often reflected, with inex-
"preſſible regret, upon her reſentment of his conduct
"in a late inſtance; but that the delicacy and the ar-
"dour of his affection were inſuperable obſtacles to his
"marriage; that where there was no liberty, there
"could be no happineſs: that he ſhould become indif-

"ferent

" ferent to the endearments of love, when they could " no longer be diſtinguiſhed from the officiouſneſs of " duty: that while they were happy in the poſſeſſion " of each other, it would be abſurd to ſuppoſe they " would part; and that if this happineſs ſhould ceaſe, " it would not only inſure but aggravate their miſery " to be inſeparably united: that this event was leſs " probable, in proportion as their cohabitation was vo- " luntary; but that he would make ſuch proviſion for " her upon the contingency, as a wife would expect " upon his death. He conjured her not to determine " under the influence of prejudice and cuſtom, but ac- " cording to the laws of reaſon and nature. After " mature deliberation," ſaid he, "remember that the " whole value of my life depends upon your will. I " do not requeſt an explicit conſent, with whatever " tranſport I might behold the lovely confuſion which " it might produce. I ſhall attend you in a few days, " with the anxiety, though not with the guilt, of a " criminal who waits for the deciſion of his judge. If " my viſit is admitted, we will never part; if it is re- " jected, I can never ſee you more."

No. CXXIV. Saturday, January 21. 1754.

———*Incedis per ignes*
Suppoſitos cineri doloſo. HOR.

With heedleſs feet on fires you go,
That hid in treacherous aſhes glow.

FLAVILLA had too much underſtanding as well as virtue, to deliberate a moment upon this propoſal. She gave immediate orders that Clodio ſhould be admitted no more. But his letter was a temptation to gratify her vanity, which ſhe could not reſiſt; ſhe ſhewed it firſt to her mother and then to the whole circle of her female acquaintance, with all the exultation of a hero who expoſes a vanquiſhed enemy at the wheels of his chariot in a triumph; ſhe conſidered it as an indiſputable evidence of her virtue, as a reproof of all who had dared to cenſure the levity of her conduct, and a licence to continue it without apology or reſtraint.

It happened that Flavilla, ſoon after this accident, was ſeen in one of the boxes at the play-houſe by Mercator, a young gentleman who had juſt returned from his firſt voyage as captain of a large ſhip in the Levant trade, which had been purchaſed for him by his father, whoſe fortune enabled him to make a genteel proviſion

proviſion for five ſons, of whom Mercator was the youngeſt, and who expected to ſhare his eſtate, which was perſonal, in equal proportions at his death.

Mercator was captivated with her beauty, but diſcouraged by the ſplendor of her appearance, and the rank of her company. He was urged rather by curioſity than hope, to inquire who ſhe was; and he ſoon gained ſuch a knowledge of her circumſtances, as relieved him from deſpair.

As he knew not how to get admiſſion to her company, and had no deſignu pon her virtue, he wrote in the firſt ardour of his paſſion to her mother; giving a faithful account of his fortune and dependence, and entreating that he might be permitted to viſit Flavilla as a candidate for her affection. The old lady after having made ſome inquiries, by which the account that Mercator had given her was confirmed, ſent him an invitation and received his firſt viſit alone. She told him, that as Flavilla had no fortune, and as a conſiderable part of his own was dependent upon his father's will, it would be extremely imprudent to endanger the diſappointment of his expectations, by a marriage which would make it more neceſſary that they ſhould be fulfilled; that he ought therefore to obtain his father's conſent, before any other ſtep was taken, leſt he ſhould be embaraſſed by engagements which young perſons almoſt inſenſibly contract, whoſe complacency in each other is continually gaining ſtrength by frequent viſits and converſation. To this counſel, ſo ſalutary and perplexing, Mercator was heſitating what to reply, when Flavilla came in, an accident which he was now only ſolicitous to improve. Flavilla was not diſpleaſed either with his perſon or his addreſs; the frankneſs and

gaiety of her diſpoſition ſoon made him forget that he was a ſtranger: a converſation commenced, during which they became yet more pleaſed with each other; and having thus ſurmounted the difficulty of a firſt viſit, he thought no more of the old lady, as he believed her auſpices were not neceſſary to his ſucceſs.

His viſits were often repeated, and he became every hour more impatient of delay: he preſſed his ſuit with that contagious ardour, which is caught at every glance, and produces the conſent which it ſolicits. At the ſame time, indeed, a thought of his father would intervene; but being determined to gratify his wiſhes at all events, he concluded with a ſagacity almoſt univerſal on theſe occaſions, that of two evils, to marry without his conſent was leſs, than to marry againſt it; and one evening, after the lovers had ſpent the afternoon by themſelves, they went out in a kind of frolic, which Mercator had propoſed in the vehemence of his paſſion, and to which Flavilla had conſented in the giddineſs of her indiſcretion, and were married at May Fair.

In the firſt interval of recollection after this precipitate ſtep, Mercator conſidered, that he ought to be the firſt who acquainted his father of the new alliance which had been made in his family: but as he had not fortitude enough to do it in perſon, he expreſſed it in the beſt terms he could conceive by a letter; and after ſuch an apology for his conduct as he had been uſed to make to himſelf, he requeſted that he might be permitted to preſent his wife for the parental benediction, which alone was wanting to complete his felicity.

The old gentleman, whoſe character I cannot better expreſs than in the faſhionable phraſe which has been contrived to palliate falſe principles and diſſolute manners,

ners, had been a gay man, and was well acquainted with the town. He had often heard Flavilla toaſted by rakes of quality, and had often ſeen her at public places. Her beauty and her dependence, the gaiety of her dreſs, the multitude of her admirers, the levity of her conduct, and all the circumſtances of her ſituation, had concurred to render her character ſuſpected; and he was diſpoſed to judge of it with yet leſs charity, when ſhe had offended him by marrying his ſon, whom he conſidered as diſgraced and impoveriſhed, and whoſe misfortune, as it was irretrievable, he reſolved not to alleviate, but increaſe; a reſolution, by which fathers, who have fooliſh and diſobedient ſons, uſually diſplay their own kindneſs and wiſdom. As ſoon as he had read Mercator's letter, he curſed him for a fool, who had been gulled by the artifices of a ſtrumpet, to ſcreen her from public infamy by fathering her children, and ſecure her from priſon by appropriating her debts. In an anſwer to his letter, which he wrote only to gratify his own reſentment, he told him, that "if he had taken Flavilla into keeping, he would have overlooked it; and if her extravagance had diſtreſſed him, he would have ſatisfied his creditors; but that his marriage was not to be forgiven; that he ſhould never have another ſhilling of his money; and he was determined to ſee him no more." Mercator, who was more provoked by this outrage than grieved at his loſs, diſdained reply; and believing that he had now moſt reaſon to be offended, could not be perſuaded to ſolicit a reconciliation.

He hired a genteel apartment for his wife of an upholſterer, who with a view to let lodgings, had taken and furniſhed a large houſe near Leiceſterfields,

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and in about two months left her to make another voyage.

He had received viſits of congratulation from her numerous acquaintance, and had returned them as a pledge of his deſire that they ſhould be repeated. But the remembrance of the gay multitude, which while he was at home had flattered his vanity, as ſoon as he was abſent alarmed his ſuſpicion: he had, indeed, no particular cauſe of jealouſy; but his anxiety aroſe merely from a ſenſe of the temptation to which ſhe was expoſed, and the impoſſibility of his ſuperintending her conduct.

In the mean time Flavilla continued to flutter round the ſame giddy circle, in which ſhe had ſhone ſo long; the number of her viſitants was rather increaſed than diminiſhed, the gentlemen attended with yet greater aſſiduity, and ſhe continued to encourage their civilities by the ſame indiſcreet familiarity: ſhe was one night at the maſquerade, and another at an opera: ſometimes at a rout, and ſometimes rambling with a party of pleaſure in ſhort excurſions from town; ſhe came home ſometimes at midnight, and ſometimes in the morning, and ſometimes ſhe was abſent ſeveral nights together.

This conduct was the cauſe of much ſpeculation and uneaſineſs to the good man and woman of the houſe. At firſt they ſuſpected that Flavilla was no better than a woman of pleaſure; and that the perſon who had hired the lodgings for her as his wife, and had diſappeared upon pretence of a voyage to ſea, had been employed to impoſe upon them, by concealing her character, in order to obtain ſuch accommodation for her as ſhe could not ſo eaſily have procured if it had been known: but

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as theſe ſuſpicions made them watchful and inquiſitive, they ſoon diſcovered, that many ladies by whom ſhe was viſited, were of good character and faſhion. Her conduct, however, ſuppoſing her to be a wife, was ſtill inexcuſeable, and ſtill endangered their credit and ſubſiſtence; hints were often dropped by the neighbours to the diſadvantage of her character; and an elderly maiden lady, who lodged in the ſecond floor, had given warning; the family was diſturbed at all hours in the night, and the door was crouded all day with meſſages and viſitants to Flavilla.

One day, therefore, the good woman took an opportunity to remonſtrate, though in the moſt diſtant and reſpectful terms, and with the utmoſt diffidence and caution. She told Flavilla, "that ſhe was a fine "young lady, that her huſband was abroad, that ſhe "kept a great deal of company, and that the world "was cenſorious; ſhe wiſhed that leſs occaſion for "ſcandal was given; and hoped to be excuſed the li-"berty ſhe had taken, as ſhe might be ruined by thoſe "ſlanders which could have no influence upon the "great, and which, therefore, they were not ſolici-"tous to avoid." This addreſs, however ambiguous, and however gentle, was eaſily underſtood and fiercely reſented. Flavilla, proud of her virtue, and impatient of controul, would have deſpiſed the counſel of a philoſopher, if it had implied an impeachment of her conduct; before a perſon ſo much her inferior, therefore, ſhe was under no reſtraint; ſhe anſwered with a mixture of contempt and indignation, that, "thoſe only "who did not know her would dare to take any liber-"ty with her character; and warned her to propagate "no ſcandalous report at her peril." Flavilla immediately

diately rose from her seat, and the woman departed without reply, though she was scarce less offended than her lodger, and from that moment she determined when Mercator returned to give him warning.

Mercator's voyage was prosperous; and after an absence of about ten months he came back. The woman, to whom her husband left the whole management of her lodgings, and who persisted in her purpose, soon found an opportunity to put it in execution. Mercator, as his part of the contract had been punctually fulfilled, thought he had some cause to be offended, and insisted to know her reasons for compelling him to leave her house. These his hostess, who was indeed a friendly woman, was very unwilling to give; and as he perceived that she evaded his question, he became more solicitous to obtain an answer. After much hesitation, which perhaps had a worse effect than any tale which malice could have invented, she told him, that "Madam "kept a great deal of company, and often staid out "very late; that she had always been used to quiet "and regularity; and was determined to let her a-"partment to some person in a more private station."

At this account Mercator changed countenance; for he inferred from it just as much more than truth, as he believed it to be less. After some moments of suspense, he conjured her to conceal nothing from him, with an emotion which convinced her that she had already said too much. She then assured him, that "he "had no reason to be alarmed; for that she had no "exception to his lady, but those gaieties which her "station and the fashion sufficiently authorised." Mercator's suspicions, however, were not wholly removed; and he began to think he had found a confidant whom

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it would be his intereſt to truſt: he, therefore, in the folly of his jealouſy, confeſſed, "that he had ſome "doubts concerning his wife, which it was of the ut-"moſt importance to his honour and his peace to re-"ſolve: he intreated that he might continue in the "apartment another year: that, as he ſhould again "leave the kingdom in a ſhort time, ſhe would ſuffer "no incident, which might confirm either his hopes "or his fears, to eſcape her notice in his abſence; and "that at his return ſhe would give him ſuch an account "as would at leaſt deliver him from the torment of ſuſ-"pence, and determine his future conduct."

There is no ſophiſtry more general than that by which we juſtify a buſy and ſcrupulous inquiry after ſecrets, which to diſcover is to be wretched without hope of redreſs; and no ſervice to which others are ſo eaſily engaged as to aſſiſt in the ſearch. To communicate ſuſpicions of matrimonial infidelity, eſpecially to a huſband, is, by a ſtrange mixture of folly and malignity deemed not only an act of juſtice but of friendſhip; though it is too late to prevent an evil, which, whatever be its guilt, can diffuſe wretchedneſs only in proportion as it is known. It is no wonder, therefore, that the general kindneſs of Mercator's confidant was on this occaſion overborne; ſhe was flattered by the truſt that had been placed in her, and the power with which ſhe was inveſted; ſhe conſented to Mercator's propoſal, and promiſed, that ſhe would with the utmoſt fidelity execute her commiſſion.

Mercator, however, concealed his ſuſpicions from his wife; and, indeed, in her preſence they were forgotten. Her manner of life he began ſeriouſly to diſapprove; but being well acquainted with her temper,

in

in which great ſweetneſs was blended with a high ſpirit, he would not embitter the pleaſure of a ſhort ſtay by altercation, chiding, and tears: but when her mind was melted into tenderneſs at his departure, he claſped her in an ecſtaſy of fondneſs to his boſom, and entreated her to behave with reſerve and circumſpection; "becauſe," ſaid he, "I know that my father keeps "a watchful eye upon your conduct, which may; "therefore, confirm or remove his diſpleaſure, and ei"ther intercept or beſtow ſuch an increaſe of my for"tune as will prevent the pangs of ſeparation which "muſt otherwiſe ſo often return, and in a ſhort time "unite us to part no more." To this caution ſhe had then no power to reply; and they parted with mutual proteſtations of unalterable love.

No.

No. CXXV. Tueſday, January 15. 1754.

——Uxorem, Poſtume, ducis?
Dic qua Tiſiphone, quibus exagitare colubris?

Juv.

A ſober man like thee, to change his life!
What fury could poſſeſs thee with a wife?

Dryden.

Flavilla, ſoon after ſhe was thus left in a kind of widowhood a ſecond time, found herſelf with child; and within ſomewhat leſs than eight months after Mercator's return from his firſt voyage, ſhe happened to ſtumble as ſhe was going up ſtairs, and being immediately taken ill, was brought to bed before the next morning. The child, though its birth had been precipitated more than a month, was not remarkably ſmall, nor had any infirmity which endangered its life.

It was now neceſſary, that the vigils of whiſt and the tumults of balls and viſits ſhould, for a while, be ſuſpended; and in the interval of languor and retirement, Flavilla firſt became thoughtful. She often reflected upon Mercator's caution when they laſt parted, which had made an indelible impreſſion upon her mind, though it had produced no alteration in her conduct: notwithſtanding the manner in which it was expreſſed, and the reaſon upon which it was founded, ſhe began

to fear that it might have been ſecretly prompted by jealouſy. The birth, therefore, of her firſt child in his abſence, at a time when, if it had not been premature, it could not poſſibly have been his, was an accident which greatly alarmed her: but there was yet another, for which it was ſtill leſs in her power to account, and which, therefore, alarmed her ſtill more.

It happened that ſome civilities which ſhe received from a lady which ſat next her at an opera, and whom ſhe had never ſeen before, introduced a converſation, which ſo much delighted her, that ſhe gave her a preſſing invitation to viſit her: this invitation was accepted, and in a few days the viſit was paid. Flavilla was not leſs pleaſed at the ſecond interview, than ſhe had been at the firſt; and without making any other inquiry concerning the lady than where ſhe lived, took the firſt opportunity to wait on her. The apartment in which ſhe was received, was the ground floor of an elegant houſe, at a ſmall diſtance from St. James's. It happened that Flavilla was placed near the window; and a party of the horſe guards riding through the ſtreet, ſhe expected to ſee ſome of the royal family, and haſtily threw up the ſaſh. A gentleman who was paſſing by at the ſame inſtant, turned about at the noiſe of the window, and Flavilla no ſooner ſaw his face, than ſhe knew him to be the father of Mercator. After looking firſt ſtedfaſtly at her, and then glancing his eye at the lady whom ſhe was viſiting, he affected a contemptuous ſneer and went on. Flavilla, who had been thrown into ſome confuſion, by the ſudden and unexpected ſight of a perſon, whom ſhe knew conſidered her as the diſgrace of his family and the ruin of his child, now changed countenance, and haſtily retired to another *part* of the room; ſhe was touched both with grief

and

and anger at this ſilent inſult, of which, however, ſhe did not then ſuſpect the cauſe. It is, indeed, probable, that the father of Mercator would no where have looked upon her with complacency; but as ſoon as he ſaw her companion, he recollected that ſhe was the favourite miſtreſs of an old courtier, and that this was the houſe in which he kept her in great ſplendor, though ſhe had been by turns a proſtitute to many others. It happened that Flavilla, ſoon after this accident, diſcovered the character of her new acquaintance; and never remembered by whom ſhe had been ſeen in her company, without the utmoſt regret and apprehenſion.

She now reſolved to move in a leſs circle, and with more circumſpection. In the mean time her little boy, whom ſhe ſuckled, grew very faſt; and it could no longer be known by his appearance, that he had been born too ſoon. His mother frequently gazed at him till her eyes overflowed with tears; and though her pleaſures were now become domeſtic, yet ſhe feared leſt that which had produced ſhould deſtroy them. After ſuch deliberation, ſhe determined that ſhe would conceal the child's age from its father; believing it prudent to prevent a ſuſpicion, which, however ill founded, it might be difficult to remove, as her juſtification would depend wholly upon the teſtimony of her dependants: and her mother's and her own would neceſſarily become doubtful, when every one would have reaſon to conclude, that it would ſtill have been the ſame, ſuppoſing the contrary to have been true.

Such was the ſtate of Flavilla's mind, and her little boy was ſix months old, when Mercator returned. She received him with joy, indeed, but it was mixed with a viſible confuſion; their meeting was more tender, but

on her part it was leſs cheerful; ſhe ſmiled with inexpreſſible complacency, but at the ſame time the tears guſhed from her eyes, and ſhe was ſeized with an univerſal tremor. Mercator caught the infection; and careſſed firſt his Flavilla, and then his boy, with an exceſs of fondneſs and delight that before he had never expreſſed. The ſight of the child made him more than ever wiſh a reconciliation with his father; and having heard at his firſt landing, that he was dangerouſly ill, he determined to go immediately and attempt to ſee him, promiſing that he would return to ſupper. He had, in the midſt of his careſſes, more than once inquired the age of his ſon, but the queſtion had been always evaded; of which, however, he took no notice, nor did it ever produce any ſuſpicion.

He was now haſting to inquire after his father; but as he paſſed through the hall, he was officiouſly laid hold of by his landlady. He was not much diſpoſed to inquire how ſhe had fulfilled his charge; but perceiving by her looks that ſhe had ſomething to communicate, which was at leaſt in her own opinion of importance, he ſuffered her to take him into her parlour. She immediately ſhut the door, and reminded him, that ſhe had undertaken an office with reluctance which he had preſſed upon her; and that ſhe had done nothing in it to which he had not bound her by a promiſe; that ſhe was extremely ſorry to communicate her diſcoveries; but that he was a worthy gentleman, and, indeed, ought to know them. She then told him, "that the "child was born within leſs than eight months after his "laſt return from abroad; that it was ſaid to have "come before its time, but that having preſſed to ſee "it, ſhe was refuſed." This, indeed, was true, and confirmed

confirmed the good woman in her ſuſpicion; for Flavilla, who had ſtill reſented the freedom which ſhe had taken in her remonſtrance, had kept her at a great diſtance: and the ſervants, to gratify the miſtreſs, treated her with the utmoſt inſolence and contempt.

At this relation, Mercator turned pale. He now recollected, that his queſtion concerning the child's birth had been evaded; and concluded, that he had been ſhedding tears of tenderneſs and joy over a ſtrumpet and a baſtard, who had robbed him of his patrimony, his honour, and his peace. He ſtarted up with the furious wildneſs of ſudden phrenzy; but ſhe with great difficulty prevailed upon him not to leave the room. He ſat down and remained ſome time motionleſs, with his eyes fixed on the ground, and his hands locked in each other. In proportion as he believed his wife to be guilty, his tenderneſs for his father revived; and he reſolved, with yet greater zeal, to proſecute his purpoſe of immediately attempting a reconciliation.

In this ſtate of confuſion and diſtreſs, he went to the houſe; where he learned that his father had died early in the morning, and that his relations were then aſſembled to read his will. Fulvius, a brother of Mercator's mother, with whom he had always been a favourite, happening to paſs from one room to another, heard his voice. He accoſted him with great ardour of friendſhip; and, ſoothing him with expreſſions of condolence and affection, inſiſted to introduce him to the company. Mercator tacitly conſented: he was received at leaſt with civility by his brothers, and ſitting down among them, the will was read. He ſeemed to liſten like the reſt; but was, indeed, muſing over the ſtory which he had juſt heard, and loſt in the ſpeculation of his own

wretchedneſs.

wretchedneſs. He waked as from a dream, when the voice of the perſon who had been reading was ſuſpended; and finding that he could no longer contain himſelf, he ſtarted up and would have left the company.

Of the will which had been read before him, he knew nothing: but his uncle believing that he was moved with grief and reſentment at the manner in which he had been mentioned in it, and the bequeſt only of a ſhilling, took him into another room; and, to apologize for his father's unkindneſs, told him, that "the reſentment which he expreſſed at his marriage, "was every day increaſed by the conduct of his wife, "whoſe character was now become notoriouſly infamous; "for that ſhe had been ſeen at the lodgings of a known "proſtitute, with whom ſhe appeared to be well ac-"quainted." This account threw Mercator into another agony; from which he was, however, at length recovered by his uncle, who, as the only expedient by which he could retrieve his misfortune and ſooth his diſtreſs, propoſed that he ſhould no more return to his lodgings, but go home with him; and that he would himſelf take ſuch meaſures with his wife, as could ſcarce fail of inducing her to accept a ſeparate maintenance, aſſume another name, and trouble him no more. Mercator, in the bitterneſs of his affliction, conſented to this propoſal, and they went away together.

Mercator, in the mean time, was expected by Flavilla with the moſt tender impatience. She had put her little boy to bed, and decorated a ſmall room in which they had been uſed to ſup by themſelves, and which ſhe had ſhut up in his abſence; ſhe counted the moments as they paſſed, and liſtened to every carriage and every ſtep that ſhe heard. Supper now was ready: her

her impatience was increaſed; terror was at length mingled with regret, and her fondneſs was only buſied to afflict her: ſhe wiſhed, ſhe feared, ſhe accuſed, ſhe apologized, and ſhe wept. In the height of theſe eager expectations and this tender diſtreſs, ſhe received a billet which Mercator had been perſuaded by his uncle to write, in which he upbraided her in the ſtrongeſt terms with abuſing his confidence and diſhonouring his bed; "of this," he ſaid, "he had now obtained ſuffi-"cient proof to do juſtice to himſelf, and that he was "determined to ſee her no more."

To thoſe, whoſe hearts have not already acquainted them with the agony which ſeized Flavilla upon the ſight of this billet, all attempts to deſcribe it would be not only ineffectual but abſurd. Having paſſed the night without ſleep, and the next day without food, diſappointed in every attempt to diſcover what was become of Mercator, and doubting if ſhe ſhould have found him, whether it would be poſſible to convince him of her innocence; the violent agitation of her mind produced a ſlow fever, which, before ſhe conſidered it as a diſeaſe, ſhe communicated to the child while ſhe cheriſhed it at her boſom, and wept over it as an orphan, whoſe life ſhe was ſuſtaining with her own.

After Mercator had been abſent about ten days, his uncle, having perſuaded him to accompany ſome friends to a country-ſeat at the diſtance of near ſixty miles, went to his lodgings in order to diſcharge the rent, and try what terms he could make with Flavilla, whom he hoped to intimidate with threats of a proſecution and divorce; but when he came, he found that Flavilla was ſinking very faſt under her diſeaſe, and that the child was dead already. The woman of the

houſe, into whoſe hands ſhe had juſt put her repeating watch and ſome other ornaments as a ſecurity for her rent, was ſo touched with her diſtreſs, and ſo firmly perſuaded of her innocence by the manner in which ſhe had addreſſed her, and the calm ſolemnity with which ſhe abſolved thoſe by whom ſhe had been traduced, that as ſoon as ſhe had diſcovered Fulvius's buſineſs, ſhe threw herſelf on her knees, and entreated, that if he knew where Mercator was to be found, he would urge him to return, that if poſſible the life of Flavilla might be preſerved, and the happineſs of both be reſtored by her juſtification. Fulvius, who ſtill ſuſpected appearances, or at leaſt was in doubt of the cauſe that had produced them, would not diſcover his nephew; but after much entreaty and expoſtulation at laſt engaged upon his honour for the conveyance of a letter. The woman, as ſoon as ſhe had obtained this promiſe, ran up and communicated it to Flavilla; who, when ſhe had recovered from the ſurpriſe and tumult which it occaſioned, was ſupported in her bed, and in about half an hour, after many efforts and many intervals, wrote a ſhort billet; which was ſealed and put into the hands of Fulvius.

Fulvius immediately incloſed and diſpatched it by the poſt, reſolving, that in a queſtion ſo doubtful and of ſuch importance, he would no farther interpoſe. Mercator, who the moment he caſt his eye upon the letter knew both the hand and the ſeal, after pauſing a few moments in ſuſpenſe, at length tore it open, and read theſe words:

"Such has been my folly, that, perhaps, I ſhould "not be acquitted of guilt in any circumſtances, but "thoſe in which I write. I do not, therefore, but for

"your

" your ſake, wiſh them other than they are. The dear " infant, whoſe birth has undone me, now lies dead at " my ſide, a victim to my indiſcretion and your reſent- " ment. I am ſcarce able to guide my pen. But I " moſt earneſtly entreat to ſee you, that you may at " leaſt have the ſatisfaction to hear me atteſt my inno- " cence with the laſt ſigh, and ſeal our reconciliation " on my lips while they are yet ſenſible of the im- " preſſion."

Mercator, whom an earthquake would leſs have affected than this letter, felt all his tenderneſs revive in a moment, and reflected with unutterable anguiſh upon the raſhneſs of his reſentment. At the thought of his diſtance from London, he ſtarted as if he had felt a dagger in his heart: he lifted up his eyes to heaven, with a look that expreſſed at once an accuſation of himſelf, and a petition for her; and then ruſhing out of the houſe, without taking leave of any, or ordering a ſervant to attend him, he took poſt horſes at a neighbouring inn, and in leſs than ſix hours was in Leiceſter-fields. But notwithſtanding his ſpeed, he arrived too late; Flavilla had ſuffered the laſt agony, and her eyes could behold him no more. Grief and diſappointment, remorſe and deſpair, now totally ſubverted his reaſon. It became neceſſary to remove him by force from the body; and after a confinement of two years in a mad-houſe, he died.

May every lady, on whoſe memory compaſſion ſhall record theſe events, tremble to aſſume the levity of Flavilla; for, perhaps it is in the power of no man in Mercator's circumſtances, to be leſs jealous than Mercator.

No. CXXVI. Saturday, January 19. 1754.

——————Steriles nec legit arenas
Ut caneret paucis, merſitque hoc pulvere verum.

LUCAN.

Canſt thou believe the vaſt eternal Mind
Was e'er to Syrts and Lybian ſands confin'd?
That he would chooſe this waſte, this barren ground,
To teach the thin inhabitants around,
And leave his truth in wilds and deſerts drown'd?

THERE has always prevailed among that part of mankind that addict their minds to ſpeculation, a propenſity to talk much of the delights of retirement; and ſome of the moſt pleaſing compoſitions produced in every age contain deſcriptions of the peace and happineſs of a country life.

I know not whether thoſe who thus ambitiouſly repeat the praiſes of ſolitude, have always conſidered, how much they depreciate mankind, by declaring, that whatever is excellent or deſirable is to be obtained by

departing from them; that the aſſiſtance which we may derive from one another, is not equivalent to the evils which we have to fear; that the kindneſs of a few is overbalanced by the malice of many; and that the protection of ſociety is too dearly purchaſed, by encountering its dangers and enduring its oppreſſions.

Theſe ſpecious repreſentations of ſolitary happineſs, however opprobrious to human nature, have ſo far ſpread their influence over the world, that almoſt every man delights his imagination with the hopes of obtaining ſome time an opportunity of retreat. Many, indeed, who enjoy retreat only in imagination, content themſelves with believing, that another year will tranſport them to rural tranquillity, and die while they talk of doing what, if they had lived longer, they would never have done. But many likewiſe there are, either of greater reſolutions or more credulity, who in earneſt try the ſtate which they have been taught to think thus ſecure from cares and dangers; and retire to privacy, either that they may improve their happineſs, increaſe their knowledge, or exalt their virtue.

The greater part of the admirers of ſolitude, as of all other claſſes of mankind, have no higher or remoter view, than the preſent gratification of their paſſions. Of theſe, ſome haughty and impetuous, fly from ſociety only becauſe they cannot bear to repay to others the regard which themſelves exact; and think no ſtate of life eligible, but that which places them out of the reach of cenſure or controul, and affords them opportunities of living in a perpetual compliance with their own inclinations, without the neceſſity of regulating

their actions by any other man's convenience or opinion.

There are others of minds more delicate and tender, eaſily offended by every deviation from rectitude, ſoon diſguſted by ignorance or impertinence, and always expecting from the converſation of mankind more elegance, purity, and truth, than the mingled maſs of life will eaſily afford. Such men are in haſte to retire from groſſneſs, falſehood, and brutality; and hope to find in private habitations at leaſt a negative felicity, an exemption from the ſhocks and perturbations with which public ſcenes are continually diſtreſſing them.

To neither of theſe votaries will ſolitude afford that content which ſhe has been taught ſo laviſhly to promiſe. The man of arrogance will quickly diſcover, that by eſcaping from his opponents he has loſt his flatterers, that greatneſs is nothing where it is not ſeen, and power nothing where it cannot be felt; and he whoſe faculties are employed in too cloſe an obſervation of failings and defects, will find his condition very little mended by transferring his attention from others to himſelf; he will probably ſoon come back in queſt of new objects, and be glad to keep his captiouſneſs employed on any character rather than his own.

Others are ſeduced into ſolitude merely by the authority of great names, and expect to find thoſe charms in tranquillity which have allured ſtateſmen and conquerors to the ſhades: theſe likewiſe are apt to wonder at their diſappointment, for want of conſidering, that thoſe whom they aſpire to imitate carried with them to their country ſeats minds full fraught with ſubjects

ſubjects of reflection, the conſciouſneſs of great merit, the memory of illuſtrious actions, the knowledge of important events, and the ſeeds of mighty deſigns to be ripened by future meditation. Solitude was to ſuch men a releaſe from fatigue, and an opportunity of uſefulneſs. But what can retirement confer upon him, who having done nothing can receive no ſupport from his own importance, who having known nothing can find no entertainment in reviewing the paſt, and who intending nothing, can form no hopes from proſpects of the future: he can ſurely take no wiſer courſe than that of loſing himſelf again in the crowd, and filling the vacuities of his mind with the news of the day.

Others conſider ſolitude as the parent of philoſophy, and retire in expectation of greater intimacies with ſcience, as Numa repaired to the groves when he conferred with Egeria. Theſe men have not always reaſon to repent. Some ſtudies require a continued proſecution of the ſame train of thought, ſuch as is too often interrupted by the petty avocations of common life: ſometimes, likewiſe, it is neceſſary, that a multiplicity of objects be at once preſent to the mind; and every thing, therefore, muſt be kept at diſtance, which may perplex the memory, or diſſipate the attention.

But though learning may be conferred by ſolitude, its application muſt be attained by general converſe. He has learned to no purpoſe, that is not able to teach; and he will always teach unſucceſsfully, who cannot recommend his ſentiments by his diction or addreſs.

Even the acquiſition of knowledge is often much facilitated by the advantages of ſociety: he that never compares his notions with thoſe of others, readily acquieſces in his firſt thoughts, and very ſeldom diſcovers the objections which may be raiſed againſt his opinions; he therefore often thinks himſelf in poſſeſſion of truth, when he is only fondling an error long ſince exploded. He that has neither companions nor rivals in his ſtudies, will always applaud his own progreſs, and think highly of his performances, becauſe he knows not that others have equalled or excelled him. And I am afraid it may be added, that the ſtudent who withdraws himſelf from the world, will ſoon feel that ardour extinguiſhed which praiſe or emulation had enkindled, and take the advantage of ſecreſy to ſleep, rather than to labour.

There remains yet another ſet of recluſes, whoſe intention entitles them to higher reſpect, and whoſe motives deſerve a more ſerious conſideration. Theſe retire from the world, not merely to baſk in eaſe, or gratify curioſity, but that being diſengaged from common cares, they may employ more time in the duties of religion: that they may regulate their actions with ſtricter vigilance, and purify their thoughts by more frequent meditation.

To men thus elevated above the miſts of mortality, I am far from preſuming myſelf qualified to give directions. On him that appears "to paſs through things "temporary," with no other care than "not to loſe "finally the things eternal," I look with ſuch veneration as inclines me to approve his conduct in the whole, without a minute examination of its parts; yet I could never forbear to wiſh, that while vice is every day mul-

multiplying ſeducements, and ſtalking forth with more hardened effrontery, virtue would not withdraw the influence of her preſence, or forbear to aſſert her natural dignity by open and undaunted perſeverance in the right. Piety practiſed in ſolitude, like the flower that blooms in the deſert, may give its fragrance to the winds of heaven, and delight thoſe unbodied ſpirits that ſurvey the works of God and the actions of men; but it beſtows no aſſiſtance upon earthly beings, and however free from taints of impurity, yet wants the ſacred ſplendour of beneficence.

Our Maker, who, though he gave us ſuch varieties of temper, and ſuch difference of powers, yet deſigned us all for happineſs, undoubtedly intended, that we ſhould obtain that happineſs by different means. Some are unable to reſiſt the temptations of importunity, or the impetuoſity of their own paſſions incited by the force of preſent temptations: of theſe it is undoubtedly the duty to fly from enemies which they cannot conquer, and to cultivate, in the calm of ſolitude, that virtue which is too tender to endure the tempeſts of public life. But there are others, whoſe paſſions grow more ſtrong and irregular in privacy; and who cannot maintain an uniform tenor of virtue, but by expoſing their manners to the public eye, and aſſiſting the admonitions of conſcience with the fear of infamy: for ſuch it is dangerous to exclude all witneſſes of their conduct, till they have formed ſtrong habits of virtue, and weakened their paſſions by frequent victories. But there is a higher order of men ſo inſpired with ardour, and ſo fortified with reſolution, that the world paſſes before them without influence or regard: theſe ought to conſider themſelves as appointed the guar-

dians of mankind: they are placed in an evil world, to exhibit public examples of good life; and may be ſaid, when they withdraw to ſolitude, to deſert the ſtation which providence aſſigned them.

T.

No. CXXVII. Tueſday, January 22. 1754.

——Veteres ita miratur, laudatque!——

HOR.

The wits of old he praiſes and admires.

"IT is very remarkable," ſays Addiſon, "that not-"withſtanding we fall ſhort at preſent of the ancients "in poetry, painting, oratory, hiſtory, architecture, "and all the noble arts and ſciences which depend "more upon genius than experience; we exceed them "as much in doggerel, humour, burleſque, and all the "trivial arts of ridicule." As this fine obſervation ſtands at preſent only in the form of a general aſſertion, it deſerves, I think, to be examined by a deduction of particulars, and confirmed by an allegation of examples, which may furniſh an agreeable entertainment

ment to thoſe who have ability and inclination to remark the revolutions of human wit.

That Taſſo, Arioſto, and Camoens, the three moſt celebrated of modern Epic Poets, are infinitely excelled in propriety of deſign, of ſentiment, and ſtyle, by Horace and Virgil, it would be ſerious trifling to attempt to prove: but Milton, perhaps, will not ſo eaſily reſign his claim to equality, if not to ſuperiority. Let it, however, be remembered, that if Milton be enabled to diſpute the prize with the great champions of antiquity, it is entirely owing to the ſublime conceptions he has copied from the book of God. Theſe, therefore, muſt be taken away before we begin to make a juſt eſtimate of his genius; and from what remains, it cannot, I preſume, be ſaid with candour and impartiality, that he has excelled Homer in the ſublimity and variety of his thoughts, or the ſtrength and majeſty of his diction.

Shakeſpear, Corneille, and Racine, are the only modern writers of Tragedy, that we can venture to oppoſe to Eſchylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The firſt is an author ſo uncommon and eccentric, that we can ſcarcely try him by dramatic rules. In ſtrokes of nature and character, he yields not to the Greeks: in all other circumſtances that conſtitute the excellence of the drama, he is vaſtly inferior. Of the three moderns, the moſt faultleſs is the tender and exact Racine: but he was ever ready to acknowledge, that his capital beauties were borrowed from his favourite Euripides; which, indeed, cannot eſcape the obſervation of thoſe who read with attention his Phædra and Andromache. The pompous and truly Roman ſentiments of Corneille are chiefly drawn from Lucan and Taci-

tus; the former of whom, by a ſtrange perverſion of taſte, he is known to have preferred to Virgil His diction is not ſo pure and mellifluous, his characters not ſo various and juſt, nor his plots ſo regular, ſo intereſting, and ſimple, as thoſe of his pathetic rival. It is by this ſimplicity of fable alone, when every ſingle act, and ſcene, and ſpeech, and ſentiment, and word, concur to accelerate the intended event, that the Greek tragedies kept the attention of the audience immoveably fixed upon one principal object, which muſt be neceſſarily leſſened, and the ends of the drama defeated, by the mazes and intricacies of modern plots.

The aſſertion of Addiſon with reſpect to the firſt particular, regarding the higher kinds of poetry, will remain unqueſtionably true, till nature in ſome diſtant age, for in the preſent, enervated with luxury, ſhe ſeems incapable of ſuch an effort, ſhall produce ſome tranſcendent genius, of power to eclipſe the Iliad and the Edipus.

The ſuperiority of the ancient artiſts in Painting, is not perhaps ſo clearly manifeſt. They were ignorant, it will be ſaid, of light, of ſhade, and perſpective; and they had not the uſe of oil colours, which are happily calculated to blend and unite without harſhneſs and diſcordance, to give a boldneſs and relief to the figures, and to form thoſe middle Teints which render every well wrought piece a cloſer reſemblance of nature. Judges of the trueſt taſte do, however, place the merit of colouring far below that of juſtneſs of deſign, and force of expreſſion. In theſe two higheſt and moſt important excellencies, the ancient painters were eminently ſkilled, if we truſt the teſtimonies of Pliny, Quintilian,

Quintilian, and Lucian; and to credit them we are obliged, if we would form to ourſelves any idea of theſe artiſts at all; for there is not one Grecian picture remaining: and the Romans, ſome few of whoſe works have deſcended to this age, could never boaſt of a Parrhaſius or Apelles, a Zeuxis, Timanthes, or Protogenes, of whoſe performances the two accompliſhed critics above mentioned, ſpeaks in terms of rapture and admiration. The ſtatues that have eſcaped the ravages of time, as the Hercules and Laocoon for inſtance, are ſtill a ſtronger demonſtation of the power of the Grecian artiſts in expreſſing the paſſions; for what was executed in marble, we have preſumptive evidence to think, might alſo have been executed in colours. Carlo Marat, the laſt valuable painter of Italy, after copying the head of the Venus in the Medicean collection three hundred times, generouſly confeſſed, that he could not arrive at half the grace and perfection of his model. But to ſpeak my opinion freely on a very diſputable point, I muſt own, that if the moderns approach the ancients in any of the arts here in queſtion, they approach them neareſt in The Art of Painting. The human mind can with difficulty conceive any thing more exalted, than "The Laſt Judgment" of Michael Angelo, and "The Transfiguration" of Raphael. What can be more animated than Raphael's "Paul preaching "at Athens?" What more tender and delicate than Mary holding the child Jeſus, in his famous "Holy "Family?" What more graceful than "The Aurora" of Guido? What more deeply moving than "The "Maſſacre of the Innocents" by Le Brun?

But no modern Orator can dare to enter the liſts with Demoſthenes and Tully. We have diſcourſes, indeed,

deed, that may be admired for their perſpicuity, purity, and elegance; but can produce none that abound in a ſublime which whirls away the auditor like a mighty torrent, and pierces the inmoſt receſſes of his heart like a flaſh of lightning; which irreſiſtibly and inſtantaneouſly convinces, without leaving him leiſure to weigh the motives of conviction. The ſermons of Bourdaloue, the funeral orations of Boſſuet, particularly that on the death of Henrietta, and the pleadings of Peliſſon, for his diſgraced patron Fouquet, are the only pieces of eloquence I can recollect, that bear any reſemblance to the Greek or Roman orator; for in England we have been particularly unfortunate in our attempts to be eloquent, whether in parliament, in the pulpit, or at the bar. If it be urged, that the nature of modern politics and laws excludes the pathetic and the ſublime, and confines the ſpeaker to a cold argumentative method, and a dull detail of proof and dry matters of fact; yet, ſurely, the Religion of the moderns abounds in topics ſo incomparably noble and exalted, as might kindle the flames of genuine oratory in the moſt frigid and barren genius: much more might this ſucceſs be reaſonably expected from ſuch geniuſes as Britain can enumerate; yet no piece of this ſort, worthy applauſe or notice, has ever yet appeared.

The few, even among profeſſed ſcholars, that are able to read the ancient Hiſtorians in their inimitable originals, are ſtartled at the paradox of Bolingbroke who boldly prefers Guicciardini to Thucydides; that is, the moſt verboſe and tedious to the moſt comprehenſive and conciſe of writers, and a collector of facts to one who was himſelf an eye-witneſs and a principal *actor in* the important ſtory he relates. And, indeed,

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it may be well preſumed, that the ancient hiſtories exceed the modern from this ſingle conſideration, that the latter are commonly compiled by recluſe ſcholars, unpractiſed in buſineſs, war, and politics; whilſt the former are many of them written by miniſters, commanders, and princes themſelves. We have, indeed, a few ſlimſy memoirs, particularly in a neighbouring nation, written by perſons deeply intereſted in the tranſactions they deſcribe; but theſe I imagine will not be compared to "The retreat of the ten thouſand" which Xenophon himſelf conducted and related, nor to "the Galic war" of Cæſar, nor "The precious fragments" of Polybius, which our modern generals and miniſters would not have diſcredited by diligently peruſing, and making them the models of their conduct as well as of their ſtyle. Are the reflections of Machiavel ſo ſubtle and refined as thoſe of Tacitus? Are the portraits of Thuanus ſo ſtrong and expreſſive as thoſe of Salluſt and Plutarch? Are the narrations of Davila ſo lively and animated, or do his ſentiments breathe ſuch a love of liberty and virtue, as thoſe of Livy and Herodotus?

The ſupreme excellence of the ancient Architecture, the laſt particular to be touched, I ſhall not enlarge upon, becauſe it has never once been called in queſtion, and becauſe it is abundantly teſtified by the awful ruins of amphitheatres, aqueducts, arches, and columns, that are the daily objects of veneration, though not of imitation. This art, it is obſervable, has never been improved in later ages in one ſingle inſtance; but every juſt and legitimate edifice is ſtill formed according to the five old eſtabliſhed orders, to which human wit has never

never been able to add a ſixth of equal ſymmetry and ſtrength.

Such, therefore, are the triumphs of the Ancients, eſpecially the Greeks, over the Moderns. They may, perhaps, be not unjuſtly aſcribed to a genial climate, that gave ſuch a happy temperament of body as was moſt proper to produce fine ſenſations; to a language moſt harmonious, copious, and forcible; to the public encouragements and honours beſtowed on the cultivators of literature; to the emulation excited among the generous youth, by exhibitions of their performances at the ſolemn games; to an inattention to the arts of lucre and commerce, which engroſs and debaſe the minds of the moderns; and above all, to an exemption from the neceſſity of overloading their natural faculties with learning and languages, with which we in theſe later times are obliged to qualify ourſelves, for writers, if we expect to be read.

It is ſaid by Voltaire, with his uſual livelineſs, "We "ſhall never again behold the time, when a Duke de "la Rochefoucault might go from the converſation of "a Paſcal or Arnauld, to the theatre of Corneille." This reflection may be more juſtly applied to the ancients, and it may with much greater truth be ſaid; "The age will never again return, when a Pericles, "after walking with Plato in a portico built by Phi-"dias, and painted by Apelles, might repair to hear "a pleading of Demoſthenes, or a tragedy of Sopho-"cles."

I ſhall next examine the other part of Addiſon's aſſertion, that the moderns excell the ancients in all the arts of Ridicule, and aſſign the reaſons of this ſuppoſed excellence.

No.

No. CXXVIII. Saturday, January 26. 1754.

Ille ſiniſtrorſum, hic dextrorſum abit; unus utrique
Error, ſed variis illudit partibus. HOR.

When in a wood we leave the certain way,
One error fools us, though we various ſtray,
Some to the left, and ſome to t'other ſide.
FRANCIS.

IT is common among all the claſſes of mankind, to charge each other with trifling away life: every man looks on the occupation or amuſement of his neighbour, as ſomething below the dignity of our nature, and unworthy of the attention of a rational being.

A man who conſiders the paucity of the wants of nature, and who, being acquainted with the various means by which all manual occupations are now facilitated, obſerves what numbers are ſupported by the labour of a few, would, indeed, be inclined to wonder, how the multitudes who are exempted from the neceſſity of working either for themſelves or others, find buſineſs to fill up the vacuities of life. The greater part of mankind neither card the fleece, dig the mine, fell the wood, nor gather in the harveſt; they neither tend herds, nor build houſes; in what then are they employed?

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This is certainly a queſtion, which a diſtant proſpect of the world will not enable us to anſwer. We find all ranks and ages mingled together in a tumultuous confuſion, with haſte in their motions, and eagerneſs in their looks; but what they have to purſue or avoid, a more minute obſervation muſt inform us.

When we analyſe the crowd into individuals, it ſoon appears that the paſſions and imaginations of men will not eaſily ſuffer them to be idle: we ſee things coveted merely becauſe they are rare, and purſued becauſe they are fugitive; we ſee men conſpire to fix an arbitrary value on that which is worthleſs in itſelf, and then contend for the poſſeſſion. One is a collector of foſſils, of which he knows no other uſe than to ſhew them; and when he has ſtocked his own repoſitory, grieves that the ſtones, which he has left behind him ſhould be picked up by another. The floriſt nurſes a tulip, and repines that his rival's beds enjoy the ſame ſhowers and ſun-ſhine with his own. This man is hurrying to a concert, only leſt others ſhould have heard the new muſician before him; another burſts from his company to the play, becauſe he fancies himſelf the patron of an actreſs; ſome ſpend the morning in conſultations with their taylor, and ſome in directions to their cook: ſome are forming parties for cards, and ſome laying wagers at a horſe race.

It cannot, I think, be denied, that ſome of theſe lives are paſſed in trifles, in occupations by which the buſy neither benefit themſelves nor others, and by which no man could be long engaged, who ſeriouſly conſidered what he was doing, or had knowledge enough to compare what he is with what he might be made. However, as people who have the ſame inclination generally flock

flock together, every trifler is kept in countenance by the ſight of others as unprofitably active as himſelf; by kindling the heat of competition, he in time thinks himſelf important, and by having his mind intenſely engaged, he is ſecured from wearineſs of himſelf.

Some degree of ſelf-approbation is always the reward of diligence; and I cannot, therefore, but conſider the laborious cultivation of petty pleaſures, as a more happy and more virtuous diſpoſition, than that univerſal contempt and haughty negligence, which is ſometimes aſſociated with powerful faculties, but is often aſſumed by indolence when it diſowns its name, and aſpires to the appellation of greatneſs of mind.

It has been long obſerved, that drollery and ridicule is the moſt eaſy kind of wit: let it be added, that contempt and arrogance is the eaſieſt philoſophy. To find ſome objection to every thing, and to diſſolve in perpetual lazineſs under pretence that occaſions are wanting to call forth activity, to laugh at thoſe who are ridiculouſly buſy, without ſetting an example of more rational induſtry, is no leſs in the power of the meaneſt than of the higheſt intellects.

Our preſent ſtate has placed us at once in ſuch different relations, that every human employment, which is not a viſible and immediate act of goodneſs, will be in ſome reſpect or other ſubject to contempt; but it is true, likewiſe, that almoſt every act, which is not directly vicious, is in ſome reſpect beneficial and laudable. "I often," ſays Bruyere, "obſerve from my "window, two beings of erect form and amiable "countenance, endowed with the powers of reaſon, "able to clothe their thoughts in language, and con-"vey their notions to each other. They riſe early in

"the

" the morning, and are every day employed in rub-
" bing two ſmooth ſtones together, or, in other terms,
" in poliſhing marble."

" If lions could paint," ſays the fable, " in the
" room of thoſe pictures which exhibit men vanquiſh-
" ing lions, we ſhould ſee lions feeding upon men."
If the ſtone-cutter could have written like Bruyere, what would he have replied?

" I look up," ſays he, " every day from my ſhop
" upon a man whom the idlers, who ſtand ſtill to gaze
" upon my work, often celebrate as a wit and a phi-
" loſopher. I often perceive his face clouded with
" care, and am told that his taper is ſometimes burn-
" ing at midnight. The ſight of a man who works
" ſo much harder than myſelf, excited my curioſity.
" I heard no ſound of tools in his apartment, and there-
" fore could not imagine what he was doing; but
" was told at laſt, that he was writing deſcriptions of
" mankind, who, when he had deſcribed them, would
" live juſt as they had lived before; that he ſat up
" whole nights to change a ſentence, becauſe the
" ſound of a letter was too often repeated; that he
" was often diſquieted with doubts about the pro-
" priety of a word which every body underſtood;
" that he would heſitate between two expreſſions equal-
" ly proper, till he could not fix his choice but by
" conſulting his friends; that he will run from one
" end of Paris to the other, for an opportunity of read-
" ing a period to a nice ear; that if a ſingle line is heard
" with coldneſs and inattention, he returns home de-
" jected and diſconſolate; and that by all this care
" and labour, he hopes only to make a little book,

" which

" which at laſt will teach no uſeful art, and which " none who has it not will perceive himſelf to want. " I have often wondered for what end ſuch a being " as this was ſent into the world; and ſhould be glad " to ſee thoſe who live thus fooliſhly, ſeized by an or- " der of the government, and obliged to labour at " ſome uſeful occupation."

Thus, by a partial and imperfect repreſentation, may every thing be made equally ridiculous. He that gazed with contempt on human beings rubbing ſtones together, might have prolonged the ſame amuſement by walking through the city, and ſeeing others with looks of importance heaping one brick upon another; or by rambling into the country, where he might obſerve other creatures of the ſame kind driving in pieces of ſharp iron into the clay, or in the language of men leſs enlightened, ploughing the field.

As it is thus eaſy by a detail of minute circumſtances, to make every thing little, ſo it is not difficult by an aggregation of effects to make every thing great. The poliſher of marble may be forming ornaments for the palaces of virtue, and the ſchools of ſcience; of providing tables, on which the actions of heroes, and the diſcoveries of ſages ſhall be recorded, for the incitement and inſtruction of future generations. The maſon is exerciſing one of the principal arts by which reaſoning beings are diſtinguiſhed from the brute, the art to which life owes much of its ſafety and all its conveniencies, by which we are ſecured from the inclemency of the ſeaſons, and fortified againſt the ravages of hoſtility; and the ploughman is changing the face of nature, diffuſing plenty and happineſs over king-

kingdoms, and compelling the earth to give food to her inhabitants.

Greatneſs and littleneſs are terms merely comparative; and we err in our eſtimation of things, becauſe we meaſure them by ſome wrong ſtandard. The trifler propoſes to himſelf only to equal or excel ſome other trifler, and is happy or miſerable as he ſucceeds or miſcarries: the man of ſedentary deſire and unactive ambition ſits comparing his power with his wiſhes; and makes his inability to perform things impoſſible, an excuſe to himſelf for performing nothing. Man can only form a juſt eſtimate of his own actions, by making his power the teſt of his performance, by comparing what he does with what he can do. Whoever ſteadily perſeveres in the exertion of all his faculties, does what is great with reſpect to himſelf, and what will not be deſpiſed by him, who has given to all created beings their different abilities: he faithfully performs the taſk of life, within whatever limits his labours may be confined, or how ſoon ſoever they may be forgotten.

We can conceive ſo much more than we can accompliſh, that whoever tries his own actions by his imagination, may appear deſpicable in his own eyes. He that deſpiſes for its littleneſs any thing really uſeful, has no pretenſions to applaud the grandeur of his conceptions; ſince nothing but narrowneſs of mind hinders him from ſeeing, that by purſuing the ſame principles every thing limited will appear contemptible.

He that neglects the care of his family, while his benevolence expands itſelf in ſcheming the happineſs of imaginary kingdoms, might with equal reaſon ſit on a throne dreaming of univerſal empire, and of the diffuſion

diffuſion of bleſſings over all the globe: yet even this globe is little, compared with the ſyſtem of matter within our view; and that ſyſtem barely ſomething more than nonentity, compared with the boundleſs regions of ſpace, to which neither eye nor imagination can extend.

From conceptions, therefore, of what we might have been, and from wiſhes to be what we are not, conceptions that we know to be fooliſh, and wiſhes which we feel to be vain, we muſt neceſſarily deſcend to the conſideration of what we are. We have powers very ſcanty in their utmoſt extent, but which in different men are differently proportioned. Suitably to theſe powers we have duties preſcribed, which we muſt neither decline for the ſake of delighting ourſelves with eaſier amuſements, nor overlook in idle contemplation of greater excellence or more extenſive comprehenſion.

In order to the right conduct of our lives, we muſt remember, that we are not born to pleaſe ourſelves. He that ſtudies ſimply his own ſatisfaction will always find the proper buſineſs of his ſtation too hard or too eaſy for him. But if we bear continually in mind our relation to the Father of Being, by whom we are placed in the world, and who has allotted to us the part which we are to bear in the general ſyſtem of life, we ſhall be eaſily perſuaded to reſign our own inclinations to unerring wiſdom, and do the work decreed for us with cheerfulneſs and diligence.

No. CXXIX. Tuesday, January 26. 1754.

Quicquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas
Gaudia —— Juv.

Whate'er excites our hatred, love, or joy,
Or hope, or fear, these themes my muse employ.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR, Bath, Dec. 29.

LEONARDO da Vinci, one of the most accomplished masters in the art of painting, was accustomed to delineate instantly in his pocket book every face in which he discovered any singularity of air or feature. By this method he obtained a vast collection of various countenances; and escaped that barren uniformity and resemblance, so visible in the generality of history pieces, that the spectator is apt to imagine all the figures are of one family.

As a moralist should imitate this practice, and sketch characters from the life, at the instant in which they strike him; I amused myself yesterday in the pump-room, by

by contemplating the different conditions and characters of the perſons who were moving before me, and particularly the various motives that influenced them to croud to this city.

Aphrodiſius, a young nobleman of great hopes and large property, fell into a courſe of early debauchery at Weſtminſter ſchool, and at the age of ſixteen privately kept an abandoned woman of the town, to whoſe lodging he ſtole in the intervals of ſchool hours, and who ſoon communicated to him a diſeaſe of peculiar power to poiſon the ſprings of life, and prevented the maturity of manhood. His body is enervated and emaciated, his cheek yellow and bloodleſs, his hand palſied, and his mind gloomy and dejected. It being thought, however, abſolutely neceſſary for the welfare of his family that he ſhould marry, he has been betrothed, in this dreadful condition, to a lady whoſe beauty and vivacity are in their meridian: and his phyſicians have ordered him to theſe ſalutary waters to try if it be poſſible for him to recover a little health before the marriage is celebrated. Can we wonder at the diminiſhed race of half-formed animals, that crawl about our ſtreets in the ſhape of men, when matches ſo unequal and ſo unnatural are not only permitted, but enjoined as a teſt of filial duty, and the condition of parental favour.

Invalidique patrum referant jejunia nati. VIRG.

——From the faint embrace
Unmanly ſons ariſe, a puny race!

Inertio is a plump and healthy old bachelor, a ſenior fellow of a rich ſociety in one of our univerſities, whoſe

chief buſineſs in life is to ride before dinner for a good appetite, and after it for a good digeſtion. Not only his ſituation but his taſte has determined him to continue in a ſtate of celibacy; "for," ſays he, "at preſent "I can afford to drink port, and keep a couple of "geldings; but if I ſhould raſhly encumber myſelf "with madam and her brats, I muſt deſcend to walk "on foot, and drink ale." He was much alarmed at miſſing his regular annual fit of the gout, and, on that account, having waited for it with impatience and uneaſineſs a month longer than the expected time, he hurried to this city in hopes of acquiring it by the efficacy of the waters. I found him yeſterday extremely dejected, and on my entering his chamber, "Life," ſaid he, "is full of vexations and diſappointments: "what a dreadful accident!" I imagined that ſome ſelected friend, ſome brother of his choice was dead, or that the college-treaſury was burnt: but he immediately undeceived me by adding—"I was preſented "with the fineſt, the fatteſt collar of brawn, and ex- "pected at dinner this day; but the raſcally carrier "has conveyed it to a wrong place, fifty miles off, "and before I can receive it, it will be abſolutely un- "fit for eating."

Here likewiſe is the learned and ingenious Crito. Crito is a genius of a ſuperior order, who hath long inſtructed and entertained his country by many incomparable works of literature and morality; and who, in a Grecian commonwealth, would have had a ſtatue erected, and have been maintained at the public expence; but in this kingdom he has with great difficulty gained a precarious competence; by inceſſant labour and application. Theſe uninterrupted and unre-

warded

warded ſtudies have at length impaired his health, and undermined a conſtitution naturally vigorous and happy: and as Crito has never been able to lay up a ſum ſufficient to procure him the aſſiſtance which the debility of ſickneſs and age require, he was obliged to inſure his life, and borrow at exorbitant intereſt a few pounds to enable him to perform this journey to Bath, which alone could reſtore his health and ſpirits; and now, as his money and credit are exhauſted, he will be compelled to abandon this place, when his cure is only half effected; and muſt retire to languiſh in a little lodging in London, while his readers and admirers content themſelves with lamenting his diſtreſs, and wondering how it comes to paſs that nothing has been done for a man of ſuch diſtinguiſhed abilities and integrity.

Doctor Pamper is poſſeſſed of three large eccleſiaſtical preferments: his motive for coming hither is ſomewhat ſingular; it is becauſe his pariſhes cannot furniſh him with a ſet of perſons that are equal to him in the knowledge of whiſt; he is, therefore, neceſſitated every ſeaſon to frequent this place, where alone he can meet with gameſters that are worth contending with.

Spumoſius, who is one of the livelieſt of free-thinkers, and had not been three months at the Temple before he became irreſiſtibly enamoured of the beauty of virtue. He always carried a Shafteſbury in his pocket, and uſed to read and explain the ſtriking paſſages to large circles at the coffee-houſe; he was of opinion that for purity and perſpicuity, elegance of ſtyle, and force of reaſoning, the characteriſtics were incomparable, and were models equally proper for regulating our taſte and our morals. He diſcovered a delicate ar-

tificial connection in theſe diſcourſes, which to vulgar eyes appear to be looſe and incoherent rhapſodies; nay, he clearly perceived, that each treatiſe depended on the foregoing, and all together compoſed one uniform whole, and the nobleſt ſyſtem of truth and virtue that had been imparted to mankind. He quarrelled irreconcilably with his deareſt friend, who happened to hint, that the ſtyle was affected and unharmonious, the metaphors far-fetched and violent, and frequently coarſe and illiberal, the arguments inconcluſive and unfair, the raillery frigid and inſipid, and totally different from the Attic irony of Socrates, which the author preſumed to propoſe for his pattern. Spumoſus always diſdained to practiſe virtue on the mean and mercenary motives of reward and puniſhment; and was convinced, that ſo excellent a creature as man might be kept in order by the ſilken cords of delicacy and decorum. He therefore frequently ſneered at the prieſtly notions of heaven and hell, as fit only to be entertained by vulgar and ſordid minds. But being lately attacked by a ſevere diſtemper, he betrayed fears that were not compatible with the boldneſs of his former profeſſions; and terrified at the approach of death, he had recourſe to various remedies, and is at laſt arrived here, as full of doubt as of diſeaſe, but feeling more acute pains in his mind than can poſſibly be inflicted on his body.

Mr. Gull was lately a ſoap-boiler at Cheſter, but having accumulated a vaſt fortune by trade, he is now reſolved to be polite, and enjoy his money with taſte. He has brought his numerous family of aukward girls hither, only becauſe he has heard that people of faſhion do at this time of the year generally take a trip

to

to Bath; and for the ſame reaſon, he intends in the ſpring to make a journey to Paris, and will, I dare ſay, commence virtuoſo on his return, and be a profeſſed judge of dreſs, pictures, and furniture.

I muſt not forget to inform you that we have the company of Captain Gairiſh a wit and a critic, who pretends he is perfectly acquainted with the beſt writers of the age, and whoſe opinion on every new work is deemed deciſive in the Pump-room. The prefaces of Dryden, and the French critics, are the ſources from which his immenſe literature is derived. Dacier's Plutarch has enabled him to talk familiarly of the moſt celebrated Greeks and Romans, and Bayle's Dictionary ſaiſhed him for a ſcholar. Sometimes he vouchſafes to think the Adventurer tolerable; but he generally exclaims "How grave and ſententious! Good heavens! "what, more Greek! This circumſtance will ruin "the credit of the paper. They will not take my "advice, for you muſt know I am intimate with all "the authors of it; they are ten in number; and ſome "of them———But as I have been entruſted with "their ſecrets, I muſt diſcloſe no more. To tell you "the truth, I have given them a few eſſays myſelf, "which I have written for my amuſement upon guard."

If theſe portraits, which are faithfully copied from the life, ſhould amuſe you, I may perhaps take an opportunity of adding to the collection.

I am,

Mr. Adventurer, yours,

PHILOMEDES.

No. CXXX. Saturday, February 2. 1754.

Qui non eſt hodie, eras minus aptus erit. MART.

The man will ſurely fail who dares delay,
And loſe to-morrow that has loſt to-day.

It was ſaid by Raleigh, when ſome of his friends lamented his confinement under a ſentence of death, which he knew not how ſoon he might ſuffer, "that "the world itſelf was only a larger priſon, out of "which ſome were every day ſelected for execution." That there is a time when every man is ſtruck with a ſenſe of this awful truth, I do not doubt; and perhaps a haſty ſpeculatiſt would conclude, that its influence would be ſtronger in proportion as it more frequently occurred: but upon every mind that is become familiar with calamity, calamity loſes its force; and miſery grows leſs only by its continuance, becauſe thoſe who have long ſuffered, loſe their ſenſibility.

If he, who lies down at night in the vigour and health of five-and-twenty, ſhould riſe in the morning with

with the infirmities of four-ſcore, it is not improbable that he would ſink under a ſenſe of his condition; regret of enjoyments which never could return, would preclude all that remained, and the laſt mournful effects of decay would be haſtened and aggravated by anticipation. But thoſe who have been enfeebled by degrees, who have been ſhaken ten years by the palſey; or crippled by the gout, frequently totter about upon their crutches with an air of waggiſh jocularity, are always ready to entertain their company with a jeſt, meet their acquaintance with a toothleſs grin, and are the firſt to toaſt a young beauty when they can ſcarce lift the glaſs to their lips. Even criminals, who knew that in the morning they were to die, have often ſlept in the night; though very few of thoſe who have been committed for a capital offence, which they knew would be eaſily proved, have ſlept the firſt night after they were confined. Danger ſo ſudden and ſo imminent alarms, confounds, and terrifies; but after a time ſtupor ſupplies the want of fortitude; and as the evil approaches, it is in effect leſs terrible, except in the moment when it arrives; and then, indeed, it is common to lament that inſenſibility, which before perhaps was voluntarily increaſed by drunkenneſs or diſſipation, by ſolitary intemperance, or tumultuous company.

There is ſome reaſon to believe, that "this power "of the world to come," as it is expreſſed in the ſublimity of Eaſtern metaphor, is generally felt at the ſame age. The dread of death has ſeldom been found to intrude upon the cheerfulneſs, ſimplicity, and innocence of children; they gaze at a funeral proceſſion with as much vacant curioſity as at any other ſhew, and ſee the world change before them without the leaſt ſenſe of

their own ſhare in the viciſſitude. In youth, when all the appetites are ſtrong, and every gratification is heightened by novelty, the mind reſiſts mournful impreſſions with a kind of elaſtic power, by which the ſignature that is forced upon it is immediately effaced: when this tumult firſt ſubſides, while the attachment of life is yet ſtrong, and the mind begins to look forward, and concert meaſures by which thoſe enjoyments may be ſecured which it is ſolicitous to keep, or others obtained to atone for the diſappointments that are paſt, then death ſtarts up like a ſpectre in all his terrors, the blood is chilled at his appearance, he is perceived to approach with a conſtant and irreſiſtible pace, retreat is impoſſible, and reſiſtance is vain.

The terror and anguiſh which this image produces whenever it firſt ruſhes upon the mind, are always complicated with a ſenſe of guilt and remorſe; and generally produce ſome haſty and zealous purpoſes of more uniform virtue and more ardent devotion, of ſomething that may ſecure us not only from the worm that never dies and the fire that is not quenched, but from total mortality, and admit hope to the regions beyond the grave.

This purpoſe is ſeldom wholly relinquiſhed, though it is not always executed with vigour and perſeverance; the reflection which produced it often recurs, but it ſtill recurs with leſs force; deſire of immediate pleaſure becomes predominant; appetite is no longer reſtrained; and either all attempts to ſecure future happineſs are deferred "to a more convenient ſeaſon," or ſome expedients are ſought to render ſenſuality and virtue compatible, and to obtain every object of hope without leſſening the treaſures of poſſeſſion. Thus vice naturally

rally becomes the diſciple of infidelity; and the wretch who dares not aſpire to the heroic virtues of a Chriſtian, liſtens with eagerneſs to every objection againſt the authority of that law by which he is condemned, and labours in vain to eſtabliſh another that will acquit him: he forms many arguments to juſtify natural deſires; he learns at length to impoſe upon himſelf; and aſſents to principles which yet in his heart he does not believe; he thinks himſelf convinced, that virtue muſt be happineſs, and then dreams that happineſs is virtue.

Theſe frauds, though they would have been impoſſible in the hour of conviction and terror, are yet practiſed with great eaſe when it is paſt, and contribute very much to prevent its return. It is, indeed, ſcarce poſſible, that it ſhould return with the ſame force, becauſe the power of novelty is neceſſarily exhauſted in the firſt onſet. Some incidents, however, there are, which renew the terror; and they ſeldom fail to renew the purpoſe: upon the death of a friend, a parent, or a wife, the comforts and the confidence of ſophiſtry are at an end; the moment that ſuſpends the influence of temptation, reſtores the power of conſcience, and at once rectifies the underſtanding. He, who has been labouring to explain away thoſe duties which he had not fortitude to practiſe, then ſees the vanity of the attempt; he regrets the time that is paſt, and reſolves to improve that which remains: but if the firſt purpoſe of reformation has been ineffectual, the ſecond is ſeldom executed; as the ſenſe of danger by which it is produced is not ſo ſtrong, the motive is leſs; and as the power of appetite is increaſed by habitual gratification, the oppoſition is more: the new conviction wears

off; the duties are again neglected as unneceſſary which are found to be unpleaſant; the lethargy of the ſoul returns, and as the danger increaſes ſhe becomes leſs ſuſceptible of fear.

Thus the dreadful condition of him, "who looks "back after having put his hand to the plough," may be reſolveed into natural cauſes; and it may be affirmed, upon mere philoſophical principles, that there is a call which is repeated no more, and an apoſtaſy from which it is extremely difficult to return.

Let thoſe who ſtill delay that which yet they believe to be of eternal moment, remember, that their motives to effect it will ſtill grow weaker, and the difficulty of the work perpetually increaſe; to neglect it now, therefore, is a pledge that it will be neglected for ever: and if they are rouſed by this thought, let them inſtantly improve its influence; for even this thought when it returns, will return with leſs power, and though it ſhould rouſe them now, will perhaps rouſe them no more. But let them not confide in ſuch virtue as can be practiſed without a ſtruggle, and which interdicts the gratification of no paſſion but malice; nor adopts principles which could never be believed at the only time when they could be uſeful; like arguments which men ſometimes form when they ſlumber, and the moment they awake diſcover to be abſurd.

Let thoſe who in the anguiſh of an awakened mind have regretted the paſt, and reſolved to redeem it in future, perſiſt invariably to do whatever they then wiſhed to have done. Let this be eſtabliſhed as a conſtant rule of action, and oppoſed to all the cavils of ſophiſtry and ſenſe; for this wiſh will inevitably return when

when it muſt for ever be ineffectual, at that awful moment when "the ſhadow of death ſhall be ſtretched "over them, and that night commence in which no "man can work."

No. CXXXI. Tueſday, February 5. 1754.

——Miſce
Ergo aliquid noſtris de moribus. JUV.

And mingle ſomething of our times to pleaſe.
DRYDEN Jun.

FONTENELLE, in his panegyric on Sir Iſaac Newton, cloſes a long enumeration of that great philoſopher's virtues and attainments, with an obſervation, that "he "was not diſtinguiſhed from other men, by any ſingu-"larity either natural or affected."

It is an eminent inſtance of Newton's ſuperiority to the reſt of mankind, that he was able to ſeparate knowledge from thoſe weakneſſes by which knowledge is generally diſgraced; that he was able to excel in ſcience and wiſdom, without purchaſing them by the neglect of little things; and that he ſtood alone, merely be-

cauſe he had left the reſt of mankind behind him, not becauſe he deviated from the beaten track.

Whoever, after the example of Plutarch, ſhould compare the lives of illuſtrious men, might ſet this part of Newton's character to view with great advantage, by oppoſing it to that of Bacon, perhaps the only man of later ages, who has any pretenſions to diſpute with him the palm of genius or ſcience.

Bacon, after he had added to a long and careful contemplation of almoſt every other object of knowledge, a curious inſpection into common life, and, after having ſurveyed nature as a philoſopher, had examined "men's buſineſs and boſoms" as a ſtateſman; yet failed ſo much in the conduct of domeſtic affairs, that, in the moſt lucrative poſt to which a great and wealthy kingdom could advance him, he felt all the miſeries of diſtreſsful poverty, and committed all the crimes to which poverty incites. Such were at once his negligence and rapacity, that it is ſaid, he would gain by unworthy practices that money, which, when ſo acquired, his ſervants might ſteal from one end of the table, while he ſat ſtudious and abſtracted at the other.

As ſcarcely any man has reached the excellence, very few have ſunk to the weakneſs of Bacon; but almoſt all the ſtudious tribe, as they obtain any participation of his knowledge, feel likewiſe ſome contagion of his defects; and obſtruct the veneration which learning would procure, by follies greater or leſs to which only learning could betray them.

It has been formerly remarked by the Guardian, that the world puniſhes with too great ſeverity, the error of thoſe, who imagine, that the ignorance of little things

may

may be compenſated by the knowledge of great; for ſo it is, that as more can detect petty failings than can diſtinguiſh or eſteem great qualifications, and as mankind is in general more eaſily diſpoſed to cenſure than to admiration, contempt is often incurred by ſlight miſtakes, which real virtue or uſefulneſs cannot counterbalance.

Yet ſuch miſtakes and inadvertencies, it is not eaſy for a man deeply immerſed in ſtudy to avoid; no man can become qualified for the common intercourſes of life, by private meditation; the manners of the world are not a regular ſyſtem, planned by philoſophers upon ſettled principles, in which every cauſe has a congruous effect, and one part has a juſt reference to another. Of the faſhions prevalent in every country, a few have ariſen, perhaps, from particular temperatures of the climate; a few more from the conſtitution of the government; but the greater part have grown up by chance, been ſtarted by caprice, been contrived by affectation, or borrowed without any juſt motives of choice from other countries.

Of all theſe, the ſavage that hunts his prey upon the mountains, and the ſage that ſpeculates in his cloſet, muſt neceſſarily live in equal ignorance; yet by the obſervation of theſe trifles, it is, that the ranks of mankind are kept in order, that the addreſs of one to another is regulated, and the general buſineſs of the world carried on with facility and method.

Theſe things, therefore, though ſmall in themſelves, become great by their frequency; and he very much miſtakes his own intereſt, who, to the unavoidable unſkilfulneſs of abſtraction and retirement, adds a voluntary neglect of common forms, and increaſes the diſ-

advantages of a ſtudious courſe of life by an arrogant contempt of thoſe practices, by which others endeavour to gain favour, and multiply friendſhips.

A real and interior diſdain of faſhion and ceremony, is, indeed, not very often to be found: much the greater part of thoſe who pretend to laugh at foppery and formality, ſecretly wiſh to have poſſeſſed thoſe qualifications which they pretend to deſpiſe; and becauſe they find it difficult to waſh away the tincture which they have ſo deeply imbibed, endeavour to harden themſelves in a ſullen approbation of their own colour. Neutrality is a ſtate, into which the buſy paſſions of man can eaſily ſubſide; and he who is in danger of the pangs of envy, is generally forced to recreate his imagination with an effort of comfort.

Some, however, may be found, who, ſupported by the conſciouſneſs of great abilities, and elevated by a long courſe of reputation and applauſe, voluntarily conſign themſelves to ſingularity, affect to croſs the roads of life, becauſe they know that they ſhall not be juſtled, and indulge a boundleſs gratification of will, becauſe they perceive that they ſhall be quietly obeyed. Men of this kind are generally known by the name of Humouriſts, an appellation, by which he that has obtained it, and can be contented to keep it, is ſet free at once from the ſhackles of faſhion; and can go in or out, ſit or ſtand, be talkative or ſilent, gloomy or merry, advance abſurdities, or oppoſe demonſtration, without any other reprehenſion from mankind, than that it is his way, that he is an odd fellow, and muſt be let alone.

This ſeems to many, as an eaſy paſſport through the various factions of mankind; and thoſe on whom it is be-

beſtowed, appear too frequently to conſider the patience with which their caprices are ſuffered as an undoubted evidence of their own importance, of a genius to which ſubmiſſion is univerſally paid, and whoſe irregularities are only conſidered as conſequences of its vigour. Theſe peculiarities, however, are always found to ſpot a character, though they may not totally obſcure it; and he who expects from mankind, that they ſhould give up eſtabliſhed cuſtoms in compliance with his ſingle will, and exacts that deference which he does not pay, may be endured, but can never be approved.

Singularity, is, I think, in its own nature univerſally and invariably diſpleaſing. In whatever reſpect a man differs from others he muſt be conſidered by them as either worſe or better: by being better, it is well known that a man gains admiration oftener than love, ſince all approbation of his practice muſt neceſſarily condemn him that gives it; and though a man often pleaſes by inferiority, there are few who deſire to give ſuch pleaſure. Yet the truth is, that ſingularity is almoſt always regarded as a brand of ſlight reproach; and where it is aſſociated with acknowledged merit, ſerves as an abatement or an allay of excellence, by which weak eyes are reconciled to its luſtre, and by which, though kindneſs is not gained, at leſt envy is averted.

But let no man be in haſte to conclude his own merit ſo great or conſpicuous, as to require or juſtify ſingularity: it is as hazardous for a moderate underſtanding to to uſurp the prerogatives of genius, as for a common form to play over the airs of unconteſted beauty. The pride of men will not patiently endure to ſee one, whoſe underſtanding or attainments are but level with their own, break the rules by which they have con-

conſented to be bound, or forſake the direction which they ſubmiſſively follow. All violation of eſtabliſhed practice implies in its own nature, a rejection of the common opinion, a defiance of common cenſure, and an appeal from general laws to private judgment: he, therefore, who differs from others without apparent advantage, ought not to be angry if his arrogance is puniſhed with ridicule; if thoſe, whoſe example he ſupercilionſly overlooks, point him out to deriſion, and hoot him back again into the common road.

The pride of ſingularity is often exerted in little things, where right and wrong are indeterminable, and where, therefore, vanity is without excuſe. But there are occaſions on which it is noble to dare to ſtand alone. To be pious among infidels, to be diſintereſted in a time of general venality, to lead a life of virtue and reaſon in the midſt of ſenſualiſts, is a proof of a mind intent on nobler things than the praiſe or blame of men, of a ſoul fixed in the contemplation of the higheſt good, and ſuperior to the tyranny of cuſtom and example.

In moral and religious queſtions only, a wiſe man will hold no conſultations with faſhion, becauſe theſe duties are conſtant and immutable, and depend not on the notions of men, but the commands of heaven: yet even of theſe, the external mode is to be in ſome meaſure regulated by the prevailing taſte of the age in which we live; for he is certainly no friend to virtue, who neglects to give it any lawful attraction, or ſuffers it to deceive the eye, or alienate the affections, for want of innocent compliance with faſhionable decorations.

It is yet remembered of the learned and pious Nelſon, that he was remarkably elegant in his manners, and

and ſplendid in his dreſs. He knew, that the eminence of his character drew many eyes upon him; and he was careful not to drive the young or the gay away from religion, by repreſenting it as an enemy to any diſtinction or enjoyment in which human nature may innocently delight.

In this cenſure of ſingularity, I have, therefore, no intention to ſubject reaſon or conſcience to cuſtom or example. To comply with the notions and practices of mankind, is, in ſome degree, the duty of a ſocial being; becauſe by compliance only he can pleaſe, and by pleaſing only he can become uſeful: but as the end is not to be loſt for the ſake of the means, we are not to give up virtue to complaiſance, for the end of complaiſance is only to gain the kindneſs of our fellow-beings, whoſe kindneſs is deſirable only as inſtrumental to happineſs, and happineſs muſt be always loſt by departure from virtue.

T.

No. CXXXII. Saturday, February 9. 1754.

——*Ferimur per opaca locorum.* VIRG.

——Driven through the palpable obſcure.

CARAZAN, the merchant of Bagdad, was eminent throughout all the eaſt for his avarice and his wealth: his origin was obſcure, as that of the ſpark, which, by the colliſion of ſteel and adamant, is ſtruck out of darkneſs; and the patient labour of perſevering diligence alone had made him rich. It was remembered, that when he was indigent he was thought to be generous; and he was ſtill acknowledged to be inexorably juſt. But whether in his dealings with men he diſcovered a perfidy which tempted him to put his truſt in gold, or whether in proportion as he accumulated wealth, he diſcovered his own importance to increaſe, Carazan prized it more as he uſed it leſs; he gradually loſt the inclination to do good, as he acquired the power; and as the hand of time ſcattered ſnow upon his head, the freezing influence extended to his boſom.

But

But though the door of Carazan was never opened by hoſpitality, nor his hand by compaſſion, yet fear led him conſtantly to the moſque at the ſtated hours of prayer; he performed all the rites of devotion with the moſt ſcrupulous punctuality, and had thrice paid his vows at the temple of the Prophet. That devotion which ariſes from the love of God, and neceſſarily includes the love of Man, as it connects gratitude with beneficence, and exalts that which was moral to divine, confers new dignity upon goodneſs, and is the object not only of affection but reverence. On the contrary, the devotion of the ſelfiſh, whether it be thought to avert the puniſhment which every one wiſhes to be inflicted, or to inſure it by the complication of hypocriſy with guilt, never fails to excite indignation and abhorrence. Carazan, therefore, when he had locked his door, and turning round with a look of circumſpective ſuſpicion, proceeded to the moſque, was followed by every eye with ſilent malignity; the poor ſuſpended their ſupplication when he paſſed by; and though he was known by every man, no man ſaluted him.

Such had long been the life of Carazan, and ſuch was the character which he had acquired, when notice was given by proclamation, that he was removed to a magnificent building in the centre of the city, that his table ſhould be ſpread for the public, and that the ſtranger ſhould be welcome to his bed, the multitude ſoon ruſhed like a torrent to his door, where they beheld him diſtributing bread to the hungry and apparel to the naked, his eye ſoftened with compaſſion, and his cheek glowing with delight. Every one gazed with aſtoniſhment at the prodigy; and the murmur

of

of innumerable voices increasing like the sound of approaching thunder, Carazan beckoned with his hand; attention suspended the tumult in a moment, and he thus gratified the curiosity which had procured him audience.

To Him who touches the mountains and they smoke, The Almighty and The Most Merciful, be everlasting honour! he has ordained sleep to be the minister of instruction, and his visions have reproved me in the night. As I was sitting alone in my Haram, with my lamp burning before me, computing the product of my merchandise, and exulting in the increase of my wealth, I fell into a deep sleep, and the hand of him who dwells in the third heaven was upon me. I beheld the Angel of death coming forward like a whirlwind, and he smote me before I could deprecate the blow. At the same moment I felt myself lifted from the ground, and transported with astonishing rapidity through the regions of the air. The earth was contracted to an atom beneath; and the stars glowed round me with a lustre that obscured the sun. The gate of Paradise was now in sight; and I was intercepted by a sudden brightness which no human eye could behold: the irrevocable sentence was now to be pronounced; my day of probation was past: and from the evil of my life nothing could be taken away, nor could any thing be added to the good. When I reflected that my lot for eternity was cast, which not all the powers of nature could reverse, my confidence totally forsook me; and while I stood trembling and silent, covered with confusion and chilled with horror, I was thus addressed by the radiance that flamed before me.

"Carazan

" Carazan, thy worſhip has not been accepted, be-
" cauſe it was not prompted by Love of God: neither
" can thy righteouſneſs be rewarded, becauſe it was
" not produced by Love of Man: for thy own ſake
" only haſt thou rendered to every man his due; and
" thou haſt approached the ALMIGHTY only for thyſelf.
" Thou haſt not looked up with gratitude nor round
" thee with kindneſs. Around thee, thou haſt indeed,
" beheld vice and folly; but if vice and folly could
" juſtify thy parſimony, would they not condemn the
" bounty of Heaven? If not upon the fooliſh and the
" vicious, where ſhall the ſun diffuſe his light, or the
" clouds diſtill their dew? Where ſhall the lips of
" the ſpring breathe fragrance, or the hand of autumn
" diffuſe plenty? Remember, Carazan, that thou haſt
" ſhut compaſſion from thine heart, and graſped thy trea-
" ſures with a hand of iron: thou haſt lived for thy-
" ſelf; and therefore, henceforth for ever thou ſhalt
" ſubſiſt alone. From the light of heaven, and from
" the ſociety of all beings, ſhalt thou be driven; ſoli-
" tude ſhall protract the lingering hours of eternity,
" and darkneſs aggravate the horrors of deſpair." At
this moment I was driven by ſome ſecret and irreſiſt-
ible power, through the glowing ſyſtem of creation,
and paſſed innumerable worlds in a moment. As I ap-
proached the verge of nature, I perceived the ſhadows
of total and boundleſs vacuity deepen before me, a
dreadful region of eternal ſilence, ſolitude and dark-
neſs! Unutterable horror ſeized me at the proſpect,
and this exclamation burſt from me with all the vehe-
mence of deſire: " O! that I had been doomed for
" ever to the common receptacle of impenitence and
" guilt! there ſociety would have alleviated the tor-

" ment

" ment of deſpair, and the rage of fire could not have " excluded the comfort of light. Or if I had been " condemned to reſide in a comet, that would return " but once in a thouſand years to the regions of light " and life; the hope of theſe periods, however diſtant, " would cheer me in the dread interval of cold and " darkneſs, and the viciſſitude would divide eternity " into time." While this thought paſſed over my mind, I loſt ſight of the remoteſt ſtar, and the laſt glimmering of light was quenched in utter darkneſs. The agonies of deſpair every moment increaſed, as every moment augmented my diſtance from the laſt habitable world. I reflected with intolerable anguiſh, that when ten thouſand thouſand years had carried me beyond the reach of all but that Power who fills infinitude, I ſhould ſtill look forward into an immenſe abyſs of darkneſs, through which I ſhould ſtill drive without ſuccour and without ſociety, farther and farther ſtill, for ever and ever. I then ſtretched out my hand towards the regions of exiſtence, with an emotion that awaked me. Thus have I been taught to eſtimate ſociety, like every other bleſſing, by its loſs. My heart is warmed to liberality; and I am zealous to communicate the happineſs which I feel, to thoſe from whom it is derived; for the ſociety of one wretch, whom in the pride of proſperity I would have ſpurned from my door, would, in the dreadful ſolitude to which I was condemned, have been more highly prized than the gold of Afric, or the gems of Golconda.

At this reflection upon his dream, Carazan became ſuddenly ſilent, and looked upward in ecſtacy of gratitude and devotion. The multitude were ſtruck at once with the precept and example; and the Caliph,

to

to whom the event was related, that he might be liberal beyond the power of gold, commanded it to be recorded for the benefit of poſterity.

No. CXXXIII. Tueſday, February 12. 1754.

At noſtri proavi Plautinos et numeros et
Laudaveres ſales; nimium patienter utrumque,
Ne dicam ſtultè, mirati; ſi modo ego et vos
Scimus inurbanum lepido ſeponere dicto.

HOR.

" And yet our ſires with joy could Plautus hear;
" Gay were his jeſts, his numbers charm'd their ear."
Let me not ſay too laviſhly they prais'd;
But ſure their judgment was full cheaply pleas'd,
If you or I with taſte are haply bleſt,
To know a clowniſh from a courtly jeſt.

FRANCIS.

THE fondneſs I have ſo frequently manifeſted for the ancients, has not ſo far blinded my judgment, as to render me unable to diſcern, or unwilling to acknowledge, the ſuperiority of the moderns, in pieces of Humour and Ridicule. I ſhall, therefore, confirm the general aſſertion of Addiſon, part of which hath already been examined.

Comedy, Satire, and Burleſque, being the three chief branches of ridicule, it is neceſſary for us to compare together the moſt admired performances of the ancients and moderns, in theſe three kinds of writing, to qualify us juſtly to cenſure or commend, as the beauties or blemiſhes of each party may deſerve.

As Ariſtophanes wrote to pleaſe the multitude, at a time when the licentiouſneſs of the Athenians was boundleſs, his pleaſantries are coarſe and unpolite, his characters extravagantly forced, and diſtorted with unnatural deformity, like the monſtrous caricaturas of Callot. He is full of the groſſeſt obſcenity, indecency, and inurbanity; and as the populace always delight to hear their ſuperiors abuſed and miſrepreſented, he ſcatters the rankeſt calumnies on the wiſeſt and worthieſt perſonages of his country. His ſtyle is unequal, occaſioned by a frequent introduction of parodies on Sophocles and Euripides. It is, however, certain, that he abounds in artful alluſions to the ſtate of Athens at the time when he wrote; and, perhaps, he is more valuable, conſidered as a political ſatiriſt than a writer of comedy.

Plautus has adulterated a rich vein of genuine wit and humour, with a mixture of the baſeſt buffoonry. No writer ſeems to have been born with a more forcible or more fertile genius for comedy. He has drawn ſome characters with incomparable ſpirit: we are indebted to him for the firſt good miſer, and for that worn-out character among the Romans, a boaſtful Thraſo. But his love degenerates into lewdneſs; and his jeſts are inſupportably low and illiberal, and fit only for "the dregs of Romulus" to uſe and to hear; he has furniſhed examples of every ſpecies of true and falſe

falſe wit, even down to a quibble and a pun. Plautus lived in an age when the Romans were but juſt emerging into politeneſs; and I cannot forbear thinking, that if he had been reſerved for the age of Auguſtus, he would have produced more perfect plays than even the elegant diſciple of Menander.

Delicacy, ſweetneſs, and correctneſs, are the characteriſtics of Terence. His polite images are all repreſented in the moſt clear and perſpicuous expreſſion; but his characters are too general and uniform, nor are they marked with thoſe diſcriminating peculiarities that diſtinguiſh one man from another; there is a tedious and diſguſting ſameneſs of incidents in his plots, which, as hath been obſerved in a former paper, are too complicated and intricae. It may be added, that he ſuperabounds in ſoliloquies; and that nothing can be more inartificial or improper, than the manner in which he hath introduced them.

To theſe three celebrated ancients, I venture to oppoſe ſingly the matchleſs Moliere, as the moſt conſummate maſter of comedy that former or latter ages have produced. He was not content with painting obvious and common characters, but ſet himſelf cloſely to examine the numberleſs varieties of human nature: he ſoon diſcovered every difference, however minute; and by a proper management could make it ſtriking: his portraits, therefore, though they appaer to be new, are yet diſcovered to be juſt. The Tartuffe and the Miſantrope are the moſt ſingular, and yet, perhaps, the moſt proper and perfect characters that comedy can repreſent; and his Miſer excels that of any other nation. He ſeems to have hit upon the true nature of comedy; which is, to exhibit one ſingular and unfamiliar cha-

racter, by ſuch a ſeries of incidents as may beſt contribute to ſhew its ſingularities. All the circumſtances in the Miſantrope tend to manifeſt the peeviſh and captious diſguſt of the hero; all the circumſtances in the Tartuffe are calculated to ſhew the treachery of an accompliſhed hypocrite. I am ſorry that no Engliſh writer of comedy can be produced as a rival to Moliere: although it muſt be confeſſed, that Falſtaff and Moroſe are two admirable characters, excellently ſupported and diſplayed; for Shakeſpear has contrived all the incidents to illuſtrate the gluttony, lewdneſs, cowardice, and boaſtfulneſs of the fat old knight: and Jonſon, has, with equal art, diſplayed the oddity of a whimſical humouriſt, who could endure no kind of noiſe.

Will it be deemed a paradox, to aſſert, that Congreve's dramatic perſons have no ſtriking and natural characteriſtic? His Fondlewife and Foreſight are but faint portraits of common characters, and Ben is a forced and unnatural caricatura. His plays appear not to be legitimate comedies, but ſtrings of repartees and ſallies of wit, the moſt poignant and polite indeed, but unnatural and ill placed. The trite and trivial character of a fop, hath ſtrangely engroſſed the Engliſh ſtage, and given an inſipid ſimiliarity to our beſt comic pieces: originals can never be wanting in ſuch a kingdom as this, where each man follows his natural inclinations and propenſities, if our writers would really contemplate nature, and endeavour to open thoſe mines of humour which have been ſo long and ſo unaccountably neglected.

If we proceed to conſider the Satiriſts of antiquity, I ſhall not ſcruple to prefer Boileau and Pope to Horace and Juvenal; the arrows of whoſe ridicule are more

more ſharp, in proportion as they are more poliſhed. That reformers ſhould abound in obſcenities, as is the caſe of the two Roman poets, is ſurely an impropriety of the moſt extraordinary kind; the courtly Horace alſo ſometimes ſinks into mean and farcical abuſe, as in the firſt lines of the ſeventh ſatire of the firſt book; but Boileau and Pope have given to their Satire the Ceſtus of Venus: their ridicule is concealed and oblique; that of the Romans direct and open. The tenth ſatire of Bioleau on women is more bitter, and more decent and elegant, than the ſixth of Juvenal on the ſame ſubject; and Pope's epiſtle to Mrs. Blount far excels them both, in the artfulneſs and delicacy with which it touches female foibles. I may add, that the imitations of Horace by Pope, and of Juvenal by Johnſon, are preferable to their originals in the appoſiteneſs of their examples, and in the poignancy of their ridicule. Above all, the Lutrin, the Rape of the Lock, the Diſpenſary and the Dunciad, cannot be parallelled by any works that the wittieſt of the ancients can boaſt of: for, by aſſuming the form of the epopea, they have acquired a dignity and gracefulneſs, which all ſatires delivered merely in the poet's own perſon muſt want, and with which the ſatiriſts of antiquity were wholly unacquainted; for the Batrachomuomachia of Homer cannot be conſidered as the model of theſe admirable pieces.

Lucian is the greateſt maſter of Burleſque among the ancients: but the travels of Gulliver, though indeed evidently copied from his true hiſtory, do as evidently excel it. Lucian ſets out with informing his readers, that he is in jeſt, and intends to ridicule ſome of the incredible ſtories in Cteſias and Herodotus: this

introduction ſurely enfeebles his ſatire, and defeats his purpoſe. The true hiſtory conſiſts only of the moſt wild, monſtrous, and miraculous perſons and accidents: Gulliver has a concealed meaning, and his dwarfs and giants convey tacitly ſome moral or political inſtruction. The Charon, or the proſpect (θεωροσκοπος), one of the dialogues of Lucian, has likewiſe given occaſion to that agreeable French Satire, entitled, "*Le Diable Boiteux*," or "The Lame Devil;" which has highly improved on its original by a greater variety of characters and deſcriptions, lively remarks, and intereſting adventures. So if a parallel be drawn between Lucian and Cervantes, the ancient will ſtill appear to diſadvantage: the burleſque of Lucian principally conſiſts in making his gods and philoſophers ſpeak and act like the meaneſt of the people; that of Cervantes ariſes from the ſolemn and important air with which the moſt idle and ridiculous actions are related; and is, therefore, much more ſtriking and forcible. In a word, Don Quixote, and its copy Hudibras, the Splendid Shilling, the Adventures of Gil Blas, the Tale of a Tub, and the Rehearſal, are pieces of humour which antiquity cannot equal, much leſs excel.

Theophraſtus muſt yield to La Bruyere for his intimate knowledge of human nature; and the Athenians never produced a writer whoſe humour was ſo exquiſite as that of Addiſon, or who delineated and ſupported a character with ſo much nature and true pleaſantry, as that of Sir Roger de Coverly. It ought, indeed, to be remembered, that every ſpecies of wit written in diſtant times and in dead languages, appears with many diſadvantages to preſent readers, from their ignorance of the manners and cuſtoms alluded to and

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expoſed; but the groſſneſs, the rudeneſs, and indelicacy of the ancients, will, notwithſtanding, ſufficiently appear, even from the ſentiments of ſuch critics as Cicero and Quintilian, who mention corporal defects and deformities as proper objects of raillery.

If it be now aſked to what can we aſcribe this ſuperiority of the moderns in all the ſpecies of ridicule? I anſwer, to the improved ſtate of converſation. The great geniuſes of Greece and Rome were formed during the times of a republican government: and though it be certain, as Longinus aſſerts, that democracies are the nurſeries of true ſublimity; yet monarchies and courts are more productive of politeneſs. The arts of civility, and the decencies of converſation, as they unite men more cloſely, and bring them more frequently together, multiply opportunities of obſerving thoſe incongruities and abſurdities of behaviour, on which ridicule is founded. The ancients had more liberty and ſerioufneſs; the moderns have more luxury and laughter.

Z.

No. CXXXIV. Saturday, February 16, 1754.

———*Virtutibus obſtat*
Res anguſta domi. JUV.

Rarely they riſe by virtue's aid, who lie
Plung'd in the depth of helpleſs poverty.
DRYDEN.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR,

As I was informed by your bookſeller, upon whom I called a few days ago to make a ſmall purchaſe for my daughter, that your whole work would be compriſed in one hundred and forty papers, I can no longer delay to ſend you the account of her life, which I gave you ſome reaſon to expect when I related my own *. This account ſhe gave in that dreadful night, the remembrance of which ſtill freezes me with horror; the night in which I had hired her as a proſtitute, and could not have been deterred from inceſt, but by an event

* No. LXXXVI.

event ſo extraordinary that it was almoſt miraculous. I have indeed frequently attempted to relate a ſtory which I can never forget, but I was always diſſatisfied with my own expreſſions, nor could I ever produce in writing a narrative which appeared equal to the effect that it wrought upon my mind when I heard it. I have therefore prevailed on the dear injured girl to relate it in her own words, which I ſhall faithfully tranſcribe.

The firſt ſituation that I remember was in a cellar; where, I ſuppoſe, I had been placed by the pariſh officers with a woman who kept a little dairy. My nurſe was obliged to be often abroad, and I was then left to the care of a girl, who was juſt old enough to lug me about in her arms, and who, like other pretty creatures in office, knew not how to ſhew her authority but by the abuſe of it. Such was my dread of her power and reſentment, that I ſuffered almoſt whatever ſhe inflicted without complaint, and when I was ſcarcely four years old, had learnt ſo far to ſurmount the ſenſe of pain and ſuppreſs my paſſions, that I have been pinched black and blue without wincing, and patiently ſuffered her to impute to me many trivial miſchiefs which her own perverſeneſs or careleſſneſs had produced.

This ſituation, however, was not without its advantages; for inſtead of a hard cruſt and ſmall beer, which would probably have been the principal part of my ſubſiſtence if I had been placed with a perſon of the ſame rank, but of a different employment, I had always plenty of milk; which, though it had been ſkimmed for cream, was not ſour, and which indeed was wholeſome food; upon which I throve very faſt, and was taken notice of

by every body, for the freſhneſs of my looks, and the clearneſs of my ſkin.

Almoſt as ſoon as I could ſpeak plain, I was ſent to the pariſh ſchool to learn to read; and thought myſelf as fine in my blue gown and badge, as a court beauty in a birth-night ſuit. The miſtreſs of the ſchool was the widow of a clergyman, whom I have often heard her mention with tears, though he had been long dead when I firſt came under her tuition, and left her in ſuch circumſtances as made her ſolicit an employment, of which before ſhe would have dreaded the labour, and ſcorned the meanneſs. She had been very genteelly educated, and had acquired a general knolwedge of literature after her marriage; the communication of which enlivened their hours of retirement, and afforded ſuch a ſubject of converſation, as added to every other enjoyment the pleaſures of beneficence and gratitude.

There was ſomething in her manner, which won my affections and commanded my reverence. I found her a perſon very different from my nurſe; and I watched her looks with ſuch ardour and attention, that I was ſometimes able, young as I was, to anticipate her commands. It was natural that ſhe ſhould love the virtue which ſhe had produced, nor was it incongruous that ſhe ſhould reward it. I perceived with inexpreſſible delight that ſhe treated me with peculiar tenderneſs; and when I was about eight years old, ſhe offered to take my education wholly upon herſelf, without putting the pariſh to any farther charge for my maintenance. Her offer was readily accepted, my nurſe was diſcharged, and I was taken home to my miſtreſs, who called me her little maid, a name which I was ambitious to deſerve, becauſe ſhe did not, like a tyrant, exact my obedience

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as a ſlave, but like a parent invited me to the duty of a child. As our family conſiſted only of my miſtreſs and myſelf, except ſometimes a chairwoman, we were always alone in the intervals of buſineſs; and the good matron amuſed herſelf, by inſtructing me, not only in reading, writing, and the firſt rules of arithmetic, but in various kinds of needlework; and what was yet of more moment, in the principles of virtue and religion, which in her life appeared to be ſo amiable, that I wanted neither example nor motive. She gave me alſo ſome general notions of the decorum practiſed among perſons of a higher claſs; and I was thus acquainted, while I was yet a child, and in an obſcure ſtation, with ſome rudiments of good breeding.

Before I was fifteen, I began to aſſiſt my benefactreſs in her employment, and by ſome plain work which ſhe had procured me, I furniſhed myſelf with decent clothes. By an inſenſible and ſpontaneous imitation of her manner, I had acquired ſuch a carriage, as gained me more reſpect in a yard-wide ſtuff, than is often paid by ſtrangers to an upper ſervant in a rich ſilk.

Such was now the ſimplicity and innocence of my life, that I had ſcarce a wiſh unſatisfied; and often reflected upon my own happineſs with a ſenſe of gratitude that increaſed it. But alas! this felicity was ſcarce ſooner enjoyed than loſt: the good matron, who was in the moſt endearing ſenſe my parent and my friend, was ſeized with a fever, which in a few days put an end to her life, and left me alone in the world without alliance or protection, overwhelmed with grief, and diſtracted with anxiety. The world indeed was before me, but I trembled to enter it alone. I knew no art by which I could ſubſiſt myſelf, and I was unwilling

to be condemned to a ſtate of ſervitude, in which no ſuch art could be learned. I therefore applied again to the officers of the pariſh, who, as a teſtimony of reſpect to my patroneſs, condeſcended ſtill to conſider me as their charge, and with the uſual ſum bound me apprentice to a mantua maker, whoſe buſineſs, of which indeed ſhe had but little, was among perſons that were ſomething below the middle claſs, and who, as I verily believe, had applied to the church-wardens for an apprentice, only that ſhe might ſilence a number of petty duns, and obtain new credit with the money that is given as a conſideration for neceſſary clothes.

The dwelling of my new miſtreſs was two back rooms in a dirty ſtreet near the Seven Dials. She received me, however, with great appearance of kindneſs; we breakfaſted, dined, and ſupped together; and though I could not but regret the alteration of my condition, yet I comforted myſelf with reflecting, that in a few years I would be miſtreſs of a trade by which I might become independent, and live in a manner more agreeable to my inclinations. But my indentures were no ſooner ſigned than I ſuffered a new change of fortune. The firſt ſtep my miſtreſs took was to turn away her maid, a poor ſlave who was covered only with rags and dirt, and whoſe ill qualities I fooliſhly thought were the only cauſe of her ill treatment. I was now compelled to light fires, go of errands, waſh linen, and dreſs victuals, and, in ſhort, to do every kind of houſehold drudgery, and to ſit up half the night, that the taſk of hemming and running ſeams, which had been aſſigned me, might be performed.

Though I ſuffered all this without murmur or complaint, yet I became penſive and melancholy; the tears

tears would often ſteal ſilently from my eyes, and my mind was ſometimes ſo abſtracted in the contemplation of my own miſery, that I did not hear what was ſaid to me. But my ſenſibility produced reſentment, inſtead of pity; my melancholy drew upon me the reproach of ſullenneſs; I was ſtormed at for ſpoiling my work with ſniveling I knew not why, and threatened that it ſhould not long be without cauſe; a menace which was generally executed the moment it was uttered; my arms and neck continually bore the marks of the yard, and I was in every reſpect treated with the moſt brutal unkindneſs.

In the mean time, however, I applied myſelf to learn the buſineſs as my laſt reſource, and the only foundation of my hope. My diligence and aſſiduity atoned for the want of inſtruction; and it might have been truly ſaid, that I ſtole the knowledge which my miſtreſs had engaged to communicate. As I had a taſte for dreſs, I recommended myſelf to the beſt cuſtomers, and frequently corrected a fault of which they complained, and which my miſtreſs was not able to diſcover. The countenance and courteſy which this gained, though it encouraged my hope of the future, yet it made the preſent leſs tolerable. My tyrant treated me with yet more inhumanity, and my ſufferings were ſo great, that I frequently meditated an eſcape, though I knew not whither to go, and though I foreſaw that the moment I became a fugitive, I ſhould forfeit all my intereſt, juſtify every complaint, and incur a diſgrace which I could never obliterate.

I had now groaned under the moſt cruel oppreſſion ſomething more than four years; the clothes which had been the purchaſe of my own money I had worn

out; and my miſtreſs thought it her intereſt not to furniſh me with any better than would juſt ſerve me to go out on her errands, and follow her with a bundle. But as ſo much of my time was paſt, I thought it highly reaſonable, and indeed neceſſary, that I ſhould make a more decent appearance, that I ſhould attend the cuſtomers, take their orders and their meaſure, or at leaſt ſit on the work. After much premeditation, and many attempts, I at length ſurmounted my fears, and in ſuch terms and manner as I thought leaſt likely to give offence, I entreated that I might have ſuch clothes as would anſwer the purpoſe, and propoſed to work ſo many hours extraordinary as would produce the money they ſhould coſt. But this requeſt, however modeſt, was anſwered only with reproaches and inſult. "I wanted, forſooth, to be a gentlewo-"man: yes, I ſhould be equipped to ſet up for my-"ſelf. This ſhe might have expected, for taking a "beggar from the pariſh: but I ſhould ſee that ſhe "knew how to mortify my pride, and diſappoint my "cunning." I was at once grieved and angered at this treatment; and I believe for the firſt time expreſſed myſelf with ſome indignation and reſentment. My reſentment, however, ſhe treated with deriſion and contempt, as an impotent attempt to throw off her authority; and declaring that ſhe would ſoon ſhew me who was miſtreſs, ſhe ſtruck me ſo violent a blow that I fell from my chair. Whether ſhe was frighted at my fall, or whether ſhe ſuſpected I ſhould alarm the houſe, ſhe did not repeat her blow, but contented herſelf with reviling the poverty and wretchedneſs which ſhe laboured to perpetuate.

I burſt into tears of anguiſh and reſentment, and made no reply, but from this moment my hatred became irreconcileable, and I ſecretly determined at all events to eſcape from a ſlavery which I accuſed myſelf for having already endured too long.

No. CXXXV. Tueſday, February 19. 1754.

——Latet anguis in herba. VIRG.

Beneath the graſs conceal'd a ſerpent lies.

It happened, that the next morning I was ſent with ſome work as far as Chelſea: it was about the middle of May. Upon me, who had long toiled in the ſmoke and darkneſs of London, and had the ſun ſhine only upon a chimney, or a wall, the freſhneſs of the air, the verdure of the fields, and the ſong of the birds, had the power of enchantment. I could not forbear lingering in my walk: and every moment of delay made me leſs willing to return; not indeed by increaſing my enjoyment, but my fear: I was tenacious of the preſent, becauſe I dreaded the future; and increaſed the evil which I approached at every ſtep by a vain attempt to return and poſſeſs that which at every ſtep I was leaving behind.

hind. I found, that not to look forward with hope, was not to look round with pleaſure; and yet I ſtill loitered away the hours which I could not enjoy, and returned in a ſtate of anxious irreſolution, ſtill taking the way home, becauſe I knew not where elſe to go, but ſtill neglecting the ſpeed which alone could make home leſs dreadful. My torment increaſed as my walk became ſhorter; and when I had returned as far as the lower end of the Mall in Saint James's Park, I was quite overwhelmed with regret and deſpair, and ſitting down on one of the benches I burſt into tears.

As my mind was wholly employed on my own diſtreſs, and my apron held up to my eyes, it was ſometime before I diſcovered an elderly lady who had ſat down by me. The moment I ſaw her, ſuch is the force of habit, all thoughts of my own wretchedneſs gave way to a ſenſe of indecorum; and as ſhe appeared by her dreſs to be a perſon in whoſe company it was preſumption in me to ſit, I ſtarted up in great confuſion, and would have left the ſeat. This, however, ſhe would not ſuffer; but taking hold of my gown, and gently drawing me back, addreſſed me with an accent of tenderneſs, and ſoothed me with pity before ſhe knew my diſtreſs. It was ſo long ſince I had heard the voice of kindneſs, that my heart melted, as ſhe ſpoke, with gratitude and joy. I told her all my ſtory; to which ſhe liſtened with great attention, and often gazed ſtedfaſtly in my face. When my narrative was ended, ſhe told me that the manner in which I had related it, was alone ſufficient to convince her that it was true; that there was an air of ſimplicity and ſincerity about me, which had prejudiced her in my favour as ſoon as ſhe ſaw me: and that, therefore, ſhe

was

was determined to take me home; that I ſhould live with her till ſhe had eſtabliſhed me in my buſineſs, which ſhe could eaſily do by recommending me to her acquaintance; and that in the mean time ſhe would take care to prevent my miſtreſs from being troubleſome.

It is impoſſible to expreſs the tranſport that I felt at this unexpected deliverance, I was utterly unacquainted with the artifices of thoſe who are hackneyed in the ways of vice; and the remembrance of the diſintereſted kindneſs of my firſt friend, by whom I had been brought up, came freſh into my mind: I therefore, indulged the hope of having found ſuch another without ſcruple; and uttering ſome incoherent expreſſions of gratitude, which was too great to be formed into compliment, I accepted the offer, and followed my conductreſs home. The houſe was ſuch as I had never entered before; the rooms were ſpacious, and the furniture elegant. I looked round with wonder; and bluſhing with a ſenſe of my own meanneſs, would have followed the ſervant who opened the door into the kitchen, but her miſtreſs prevented me. She ſaw my confuſion, and encouraging me with a ſmile, took me up ſtairs into a kind of dreſſing-room, where ſhe immediately furniſhed me with clean ſhoes and ſtockings, a cap, handkerchief, ruffles and apron, and a night-gown of genteel Iriſh ſtuff, which had not been much worn, though it was ſpotted and ſtained in many places: they belonged, ſhe ſaid, to her couſin, a young lady for whom ſhe had undertaken to provide; and inſiſted upon my putting them on, that I might ſit down with her family at dinner; "for," ſaid ſhe, "I

"have

" have no acquaintance, to whom I could recommend " a mantua-maker that I kept in my kitchen."

I perceived that ſhe watched me with great attention while I was dreſſing, and ſeemed to be greatly delighted with the alteration in my appearance when I had done. " I ſee," ſaid ſhe, " that you was made " for a gentlewoman, and a gentlewoman you ſhall " be, or it ſhall be your own fault." I could only curt'ſy in anſwer to this compliment; but notwithſtanding the appearance of diffidence and modeſty in the bluſh which I felt burn upon my cheek, yet my heart ſecretly exulted in a proud confidence that it was true. When I came down ſtairs, I was introduced by my patronneſs (who had told me that her name was Wellwood) to the young lady her couſin, and three others; to whom, ſoon after we were ſeated, ſhe related my ſtory, intermixing much invective againſt my miſtreſs, and much flattery to me, with neither of which, if the truth be confeſſed, I was much diſpleaſed.

After dinner, as I underſtood that company was expected, I entreated leave to retire, and was ſhewed up ſtairs into a ſmall chamber very neatly furniſhed, which I was deſired to conſider as my own. As the company ſtaid till it was very late, I drank tea and ſupped alone, one of the ſervants being ordered to attend me.

The next morning, when I came down ſtairs to breakfaſt, Mrs. Wellwood preſented me with a piece of printed cotton ſufficient for a ſack and coat, and about twelve yards of ſlight ſilk for a night-gown, which, ſhe ſaid, I ſhould make up myſelf as a ſpecimen of my ſkill. I attempted to excuſe myſelf from accepting this benefaction, with much heſitation and confuſion; but I was commanded with a kind frown, and in

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a peremptory tone, to be ſilent. I was told, that, when buſineſs came in, I ſhould pay all my debts; that in the mean time, I ſhould be ſolicitous only to ſet up; and that a change of genteel apparel might be conſidered as my ſtock in trade, ſince without it my buſineſs could neither be procured nor tranſacted.

To work, therefore, I went; my clothes were made and worn; many encomiums were laviſhed upon my dexterity and my perſon; and thus I was entangled in the ſnare that had been laid for me, before I diſcovered my danger. I had contracted debts which it was impoſſible I ſhould pay; the power of the law could now be applied to effect the purpoſes of guilt; and my creditor could urge me to her purpoſe, both by hope and fear.

I had now been near a month in my new lodging; and great care had hitherto been taken to conceal whatever might ſhock my modeſty, or acquaint me with the danger of my ſituation. Some incidents, however, notwithſtanding this caution, had fallen under my notice, that might well have alarmed me; but as thoſe who are waking from a pleaſing dream ſhut their eyes againſt the light, and endeavour to prolong the deluſion by ſlumbering again, I checked my ſuſpicions the moment they roſe, as if danger that was not known would not exiſt, without conſidering that inquiry alone could confirm the good, and enable me to eſcape the evil.

The houſe was often filled with company, which divided into ſeparate rooms; the viſits were frequently continued till midnight, and ſometimes till morning; I had, however, always deſired leave to retire, which had hitherto been permitted, though not without reluctance

luctance; but at length I was preſſed to make tea, with an importunity that I could not reſiſt. The company was very gay, and ſome familiarities paſſed between the gentlemen and ladies, which threw me into confuſion, and covered me with bluſhes; yet I was ſtill zealous to impoſe upon myſelf, and therefore was contented with the ſuppoſition, that they were liberties allowed among perſons of faſhion, many of whoſe polite levities I had heard deſcribed and cenſured by the dear monitor of my youth, to whom I owed all my virtue and all my knowledge. I could not, however, reflect without ſolicitude and anxiety, that ſince the firſt week of my arrival I had heard no more of my buſineſs. I had, indeed, frequently ventured to mention it, and ſtill hoped, that when my patroneſs had procured me a little ſet of cuſtomers among her friends, I ſhould be permitted to venture into a room of my own; for I could not think of carrying it on where it would degrade my benefactreſs, of whom it could not without an affront be ſaid, that ſhe let lodgings to a mantua-maker; nor could I without indecorum diſtribute directions where I was to be found, till I had removed to another houſe. But whenever I introduced this ſubject of converſation, I was either rallied for my gravity, or gently reproached with pride, as impatient of obligation: Sometimes I was told with an air of merriment, that my buſineſs ſhould be pleaſure; and ſometimes I was entertained with amorous ſtories, and excited by licentious and flattered deſcriptions, to a reliſh of luxurious idleneſs and expenſive amuſements. In ſhort, my ſuſpicions gradually increaſed, and my fears grew ſtronger, till my dream was at an end, and I could ſlumber no more. The

terror

terror that ſeized me, when I could no longer doubt into what hands I had fallen, is not to be expreſſed, nor indeed could it be concealed: the effect which it produced in my aſpect and behaviour afforded the wretch who attempted to ſeduce me no proſpect of ſucceſs; and as ſhe deſpaired of exciting me by the love of pleaſure to voluntary guilt, ſhe determined to effect her purpoſe by ſurpriſe, and drive me into her toils by deſperation.

It was not leſs my misfortune than reproach, that I did not immediately quit a place in which I knew myſelf devoted to deſtruction. This, indeed, Mrs. Wellwood was very aſſiduous to prevent: the morning after I had diſcovered her purpoſe, the talk about my buſineſs was renewed; and as ſoon as we had breakfaſted, ſhe took me out with her in a hackney-coach, under pretence of procuring me a lodging; but ſhe had ſtill ſome plauſible objection againſt all that we ſaw. Thus ſhe contrived to buſy my mind, and keep me with her the greateſt part of the day; at three we returned to dinner, and paſſed the afternoon without company. I drank tea with the family; and in the evening, being uncommonly drowſy, I went to bed near two hours ſooner than uſual.

No

No. CXXXVI. Tuesday, February 23. 1754.

——Quis talia fando
Temperat a lacrimis? VIRG.

And who can hear this tale without a tear?

To the transactions of this night I was not conscious; but what they had been, the circumstances of the morning left me no room to doubt. I discovered with astonishment, indignation, and despair, which for a time suspended all my faculties, that I had suffered irreparable injury in a state of insensibility; not so much to gratify the wretch by whom I had been abused, as that I might with less scruple admit another, and by reflecting that it was impossible to recover what I had lost, became careless of all that remained. Many artifices were used to soothe me; and when these were found to be ineffectual, attempts were made to intimidate me with menaces. I knew not exactly what passed in the first fury of my distraction, but at length it quite exhausted me. In the evening, being calm through

through mere languor and debility, and no precaution having been taken to detain me, becauſe I was not thought able to eſcape, I found means to ſteal down ſtairs, and get into the ſtreet without being miſſed. Wretched as I was, I felt ſome emotions of joy when I firſt found myſelf at liberty; though it was no better than the liberty of an exile in a deſert, where, having eſcaped from the dungeon and the wheel, he muſt yet, without a miracle, be deſtroyed by ſavages or hunger. It was not long, indeed, before I reflected, that I knew no houſe that would receive me, and that I had no money in my pocket. I had not, however, the leaſt inclination to go back. I ſometimes thought of returning to my old miſtreſs, the mantua-maker; but the moment I began to anticipate the malicious inference ſhe would draw from my abſence and appearance, and her triumph in the mournful neceſſity that urged me to return, I determined rather to ſuffer any other evil that could befal me.

Thus deſtitute and forlorn, feeble and diſpirited, I continued to creep along till the ſhops were all ſhut, and the deſerted ſtreets became ſilent. The buſy crowds, which had almoſt borne me before them, were now diſſipated; and every one was retired home, except a few wretched outcaſts like myſelf, who were either huddled together in a corner, or ſtrolling about not knowing whither they went. It is not eaſy to conceive the anguiſh with which I reflected upon my condition; and perhaps it would ſcarcely have been thought poſſible, that a perſon, who was not a fugitive from juſtice, nor an enemy to labour, could be thus deſtitute even of the little that is eſſential to life, and in danger of periſhing for want in the midſt of a populous city, abound-

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ing with accommodations for every rank, from the peer to the beggar. Such, however, was my lot. I found myſelf compelled by neceſſity to paſs the night in the ſtreets, without hope of paſſing the next in any other place, or indeed of procuring food to ſupport me till it arrived. I had now faſted the whole day; my languor increaſed every moment; I was weary and fainting; my face was covered with a cold ſweat, and my legs trembled under me; but I did not dare to ſit down, or to walk twice along the ſame ſtreet, leſt I ſhould have been ſeized by the watch, or inſulted by ſome voluntary vagabond in the rage or wantonneſs of drunkenneſs or luſt. I knew not, indeed, well how to vary my walk; but imagined, that, upon the whole, I ſhould be more ſafe in the city than among the brothels in the Strand, or in ſtreets, which, being leſs frequented, are leſs carefully watched: for though I ſcarce ventured to conſider the law as my friend, yet I was more afraid of thoſe who ſhould attempt to break the peace, than thoſe who were appointed to keep it. I went forward, therefore, as well as I was able, and paſſed through St. Paul's Church-yard as the clock ſtruck one; but ſuch was my misfortune, that the calamity which I dreaded overtook me in the very place to which I had fled to avoid it. Juſt as I was croſſing at the corner into Cheapſide, I was laid hold on by a man not meanly dreſſed, who would have hurried me down towards the Old Change. I knew not what he ſaid, but I ſtrove to diſengage myſelf from him without making any reply: my ſtruggles indeed were weak, and the man ſtill keeping his hold, and perhaps miſtaking the feebleneſs of my reſiſtance for ſome inclination to comply, proceeded to indecencies, for which

I ſtruck him with the ſudden force that was ſupplied by rage and indignation; but my whole ſtrength was exhauſted in the blow, which the brute inſtantly returned, and repeated, till I fell. Inſtinct is ſtill ready in the defence of life, however wretched; and though the moment before I had wiſhed to die, yet in this diſtreſs I ſpontaneouſly cried out for help. My voice was heard by a watchman, who immediately ran towards me, and finding me upon the ground, lifted up his lantern, and examined me with an attention which made me reflect with great confuſion upon the diſorder of my dreſs, which before had not once occurred to my thoughts: my hair hung looſely about my ſhoulders, my ſtays were but half-laced, and the reſt of my clothes were carelefsly thrown on in the tumult and diſtraction of mind, which prevented my attending to trivial circumſtances when I made my eſcape from Wellwood's. My general appearance, and the condition in which I was found, convinced the watchman that I was a ſtrolling proſtitute; and finding that I was not able to riſe without aſſiſtance, he alſo concluded that I was drunk; he therefore ſet down his lantern, and calling his comrade to aſſiſt him, they lifted me up. As my voice was faltering, my looks wild, and my whole frame ſo feeble that I tottered as I ſtood, the man was confirmed in his firſt opinion; and ſeeing my face bloody, and my eyes ſwelled, he told me with a ſneer, that to ſecure me from farther ill treatment, he would provide a lodging for me till the morning; and accordingly they dragged me between them to the Compter, without any regard to my entreaties or diſtreſs.

I paſſed

I paſſed the night in agonies, upon which even now I ſhudder to look back; and in the morning I was carried before a magiſtrate. The watchman gave an account of his having found me very drunk, crying out murder, and breeding a riot on the ſtreet at one o'clock in the morning. "I was ſcarcely yet ſober," he ſaid, "as his worſhip might ſee, and had been pretty "handſomely beaten; but he ſuppoſed it was for an "unſucceſsful attempt to pick a pocket, at which I "muſt have been very dextrous indeed, to have ſuc- "ceeded in that condition."

This account, however injurious, was greatly con- firmed by my appearance: I was almoſt covered with kennel dirt, my face was diſcoloured, my ſpeech was inarticulate, and I was ſo oppreſſed with faintneſs and terror, that I could not ſtand without a ſupport. The magiſtrate, however, with great kindneſs, called upon me to make my defence, which I attempted by relat- ing the truth: but the ſtory was told with ſo much heſitation, and was in itſelf ſo wild and improbable ſo like the inartificial tales that are haſtily formed as an apology for detected guilt, that it could not be be- lieved; and I was told, that except I could ſupport my character by ſome credible witneſs, I ſhould be committed to Bridewell.

I was thunderſtruck at this menace, and had form- ed ideas ſo dreadful of the place to which I was to be ſent, that my dungeon at the mantua-maker's became a palace in the compariſon; and to return thither, with whatever diſadvantages, was now the utmoſt object of my hope. I therefore deſired that my miſtreſs might be ſent for, and flattered myſelf that ſhe would at leaſt

take me out of a houſe of correction, if it were only for the pleaſure of tormenting me herſelf.

In about two hours the meſſenger returned, and with him my tyrant, who eyed me with ſuch malicious pleaſure, that my hopes failed me the moment I ſaw her, and I almoſt repented that ſhe was come. She was, I believe, glad of an opportunity effectually to prevent my obtaining any part of her buſineſs, which ſhe had ſome reaſon to fear; and therefore told the juſtice who examined her, that "ſhe had taken me a "beggar from the pariſh four years ago, and taught "me her trade; but that I had been always ſullen, "miſchievous, and idle; that it was more than a "month ſince I had clandeſtinely left her ſervice, in "decent and modeſt apparel fitting my condition; and "that ſhe would leave his worſhip to judge, whether "I came honeſtly by the taudry rags which I had on "my back." This account, however correſpondent with my own, ſerved only to confirm thoſe facts which condemned me: it appeared inconteſtibly, that I had deſerted my ſervice, and been debauched in a brothel, where I had been furniſhed with clothes, and continued more than a month. That I had been ignorant of my ſituation, proſtituted without my conſent, and at laſt had eſcaped to avoid farther injury, appeared to be fictitious circumſtances, invented to palliate my offence: the perſon whom I had accuſed lived in another county, and it was neceſſary for the preſent to bring the matter to a ſhort iſſue: my miſtreſs, therefore, was aſked, whether ſhe would receive me again upon my promiſe of good behaviour; and upon her peremptory refuſal, my mittimus was made out, and I was committed to hard labour. The clerk however

was ordered to take a memorandum of my charge againſt Wellwood, and I was told that inquiry ſhould be made about her.

After I had been confined about a week, a note was brought me without date or name, in which I was told, "that my malice againſt thoſe who would have "been my benefactors was diſappointed; that if I "would return to them, my diſcharge ſhould be pro-"cured, and I ſhould ſtill be kindly received; but "that if I perſiſted in my ingratitude, it ſhould not "not be unrevenged." From this note I conjectured, that Wellwood had found means to ſtop an inquiry into her conduct, which ſhe had diſcovered to have been begun upon my information, and had thus learnt where I was to be found: I therefore returned no anſwer, but that I was contented with my ſituation, and prepared to ſuffer whatever providence ſhould appoint.

During my confinement, I was not treated with great ſeverity; and at the next court, as no particular crime was alleged againſt me, I was ordered to be diſcharged. As my character was now irretrievably loſt, as I had no friend who would afford me ſhelter, nor any buſineſs to which I could apply, I had no proſpect but again to wander about the ſtreets, without lodging and without food. I therefore intreated, that the officers of the pariſh to which I belonged, might be ordered to receive me into the work-houſe, till they could get me a ſervice, or find me ſome employment by which my labour would procure me a ſubſiſtence. This requeſt, ſo reaſonable, and ſo uncommon, was much commended, and immediately granted; but as I was going out at the gate with my paſs in my hand,

I was

I was met by a bailiff, with an emiſſary of Wellwood's, and arreſted for a debt of twenty pounds. As it was no more in my power to procure bail than to pay the money, I was immediately dragged to Newgate. It was ſoon known that I had not a farthing in my pocket, and that no money either for fees or accommodations could be expected; I was therefore turned over to a place called the common ſide, among the moſt wretched and the moſt profligate of human beings. In Bridewell, indeed, my aſſociates were wicked, but they were overawed by the preſence of their taſk-maſter, and reſtrained from licentiouſneſs by perpetual labour; but my ears were now violated every moment by oaths, execrations, and obſcenity; the converſation of Mother Wellwood, her inmates, and her gueſts, was chaſte and holy to that of the inhabitants of this place; and in compariſon with their life, that to which I had been ſolicited was innocent. Thus I began inſenſibly to think of mere incontinence without horror; and, indeed, became leſs ſenſible of more complicated enormities, in proportion as they became familiar. My wretchedneſs, however, was not alleviated, though my virtue became leſs. I was without friends and without money; and the miſery of confinement in a noiſome dungeon was aggravated by hunger and thirſt, and cold and nakedneſs. In this hour of trial, I was again aſſailed by the wretch, who had produced it only to facilitate her ſucceſs. And let not thoſe, before whom the path of virtue has been ſtrewed with flowers, and every thorn removed by proſperity, too ſeverely cenſure me, to whom it was a barren and a rugged road in which I had long toiled with labour and anguiſh, if at laſt, when I was be-

nighted in a ſtorm, I turned at the firſt light, and haſted to the neareſt ſhelter: let me not be too ſeverely cenſured, if I now accepted liberty, and eaſe, and plenty, upon the only terms on which they could be obtained. I conſented, with whatever reluctance and compunction, to return, and complete my ruin in the place where it was begun. The action of debt was immediately withdrawn, my fees were paid, and I was once more removed to my lodging near Covent Garden. In a ſhort time I recovered my health and beauty; I was again dreſſed and adorned at the expence of my tyrant, whoſe power increaſed in proportion to my debt: the terms of proſtitution were preſcribed me; and out of the money which was the price not only of my body but my ſoul, I ſcarce received more than I could have earned by weeding in a field. The will of my creditor was my law, from which I knew not how to appeal. My ſlavery was moſt deplorable, and my employment moſt odious; for the principles of virtue and religion, which had been implanted in my youth, however they had been choaked by weeds, could never be plucked up by the root; nor did I ever admit a diſhonourable viſit, but my heart ſunk, my lips quivered, and my knees ſmote each other.

From this dreadful ſituation I am at length delivered. But while I lift up my heart in gratitude to him who alone can bring good out of evil, I deſire it may be remembered, that my deviation to ill was natural, my recovery almoſt miraculous. My firſt ſtep to vice was the deſertion of my ſervice; and of this, all my guilt and miſery were the conſequence. Let none, therefore, quit the poſt that is aſſigned them by providence, or venture out of the ſtreight way; the bye-

path

path, though it may invite them by its verdure, will inevitably lead them to a precipice; nor can it, without folly and preſumption, be pronounced of any, that their firſt deviation from rectitude will produce leſs evil than mine.

Such, Mr. Adventurer, is the ſtory of my child, and ſuch are her reflections upon it; to which I can only add, that he who abandons his offspring, or corrupts them by his example, perpetrates greater evil than a murderer, in proportion as immortality is of more value than life.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

AGAMUS.

No. CXXXVII. Tuesday, February 26. 1754.

Τί δ' ἔμοιγε. PYTH.

What have I been doing?

As a man is a being very sparingly furnished with the power of prescience, he can provide for the future only by considering the past; and as futurity is all in which he has any real interest, he ought very diligently to use the only means by which he can be enabled to enjoy it, and frequently to revolve the experiments which he has hitherto made upon life, that he may gain wisdom from his mistakes, and caution from his miscarriages.

Though I do not so exactly conform to the precepts of Pythagoras, as to practise every night this solemn recollection, yet I am not so lost in dissipation as wholly to omit it; nor can I forbear sometimes to inquire of myself, in what employment my life has passed away. Much of my time has sunk into nothing, and left no trace by which it can be distinguished; and of this I

now

now only know, that it was once in my power, and might once have been improved.

Of other parts of life memory can give ſome account; at ſome hours I have been gay, and at others ſerious; I have ſometimes mingled in converſation, and ſometimes meditated in ſolitude; one day has been ſpent in conſulting the ancient ſages, and another in writing Adventurers.

At the concluſion of any undertaking, it is uſual to compute the loſs and profit. As I ſhall ſoon ceaſe to write Adventurers, I could not forbear lately to conſider what has been the conſequence of my labours; and whether I am to reckon the hours laid out in theſe compoſitions, as applied to a good and laudable purpoſe, or ſuffered to fume away in uſeleſs evaporations.

That I have intended well, I have the atteſtation of my own heart: but good intentions may be fruſtrated, when they are executed without ſuitable ſkill, or directed to an end unattainable in itſelf.

Some there are, who leave writers very little room for ſelf-congratulation; ſome who affirm, that books have no influence upon the public, that no age was ever made better by its authors, and that to call upon mankind to correct their manners, is like Xerxes, to ſcourge the wind or ſhackle the torrent.

This opinion they pretend to ſupport by unfailing experience. The world is full of fraud and corruption, rapine, or malignity; intereſt is the ruling motive of mankind, and every one is endeavouring to increaſe his own ſtores of happineſs by perpetual accumulation, without reflecting upon the numbers whom his ſuperfluity condemns to want: in this ſtate of things a book of morality is publiſhed, in which charity and benevolence are ſtrongly enforced; and it is proved beyond oppoſition

that men are happy in proportion as they are virtuous, and rich as they are liberal. The book is applauded, and the author is preferred; he imagines his applauſe deſerved, and receives leſs pleaſure from the acquiſition of reward than the conſciouſneſs of merit. Let us look again upon mankind: intereſt is ſtill the ruling motive, and the world is yet full of fraud and corruption, malevolence and rapine.

The difficulty of confuting this aſſertion ariſes merely from its generality and comprehenſion: to overthrow it by a detail of diſtinct facts, requires a wider ſurvey of the world than human eyes can take; the progreſs of reformation is gradual and ſilent, as the extenſion of evening ſhadows; we know that they were ſhort at noon, and are long at ſun-ſet, but our ſenſes were not able to diſcern their increaſe: we know of every civil nation, that it was once ſavage, and how was it reclaimed but by a precept and admonition?

Mankind are univerſally corrupt, but corrupt in different degrees; as they are univerſally ignorant, yet with greater or leſs irradiations of knowledge. How has knowledge or virtue been increaſed and preſerved in one place beyond another, but by diligent inculcation and rational inforcement.

Books of morality are daily written, yet its influence is ſtill little in the world; ſo the ground is annually ploughed, and yet multitudes are in want of bread. But, ſurely, neither the labours of the moraliſt nor the huſbandman are vain: let them for a while neglect their taſks, and their uſefulneſs will be known; the wickedneſs that is now frequent would become univerſal, the breadthat is now ſcarce would wholly fail.

The power, indeed, of every individual is ſmall, and the conſequence of his endeavours imperceptible in a general

general proſpect of the world. Providence has given no man ability to do much, that ſomething might be left for every man to do. The buſineſs of life is carried on by a general co-operation; in which the part of any ſingle man can be no more diſtinguiſhed, than the effect of a particular drop when the meadows are floated by a ſummer ſhower: yet every drop increaſes the inundation, and every hand adds to the happineſs or miſery of mankind.

That a writer, however zealous or eloquent, ſeldom works a viſible effect upon cities or nations, will readily be granted. The book which is read moſt, is read by few, compared with thoſe that read it not; and of thoſe few, the greater part peruſe it with diſpoſitions that very little favour their own improvment.

It is difficult to enumerate the ſeveral motives which procure to books the honour of peruſal: ſpite, vanity, and curioſity, hope and fear, love and hatred, every paſſion which incites to any other action, ſerves at one time or other to ſtimulate a reader.

Some are fond to take a celebrated volume into their hands, becauſe they hope to diſtinguiſh their penetration, by finding faults which have eſcaped the public; others eagerly buy it in the firſt bloom of reputation that they may join the chorus of praiſe, and not lag, as Falſtaff terms it, in "the rearward of the faſhion."

Some read for ſtyle, and ſome for argument, one has little care about the ſentimeut, he obſerves only how it is expreſſed; another regards not the concluſion, but is diligent to mark how it is inferred: they read for other purpoſes than the attainment of practical knowledge; and are no more likely to grow wiſe by an examination of a treatiſe of moral prudence, than an ar-

chitect to inflame his devotion by conſidering attentively the proportions of a temple.

Some read that they may embelliſh their converſation, or ſhine in diſpute; ſome that they may not be detected in ignorance, or want the reputation of literary accompliſhments: but the moſt general and prevalent reaſon of ſtudy is the impoſſibility of finding another amuſement equally cheap or conſtant, equally dependent on the hour or the weather. He that wants money to follow the chaſe of pleaſure through her yearly circuit, and is left at home when the gay world rolls to Bath or Tunbridge; he whoſe gout compels him to hear from his chamber the rattle of chariots tranſporting happier beings to plays and aſſemblies, will be forced to ſee in books a refuge from himſelf.

The author is not wholly uſeleſs, who provides innocent amuſements for minds like theſe. There are in the preſent ſtate of things ſo many more inſtigations to evil, than incitements to good, that he who keeps me in a neutral ſtate, may be juſtly conſidered as a benefactor to life.

But perhaps it ſeldom happens, that ſtudy terminates in mere paſtime. Books have always a ſecret influence on the underſtanding; we cannot at pleaſure obliterate ideas; he that reads books of ſcience, though without any fixed deſire of improvement, will grow more knowing; he that entertains himſelf with moral or religious treatiſes, will imperceptibly advance in goodneſs; the ideas which are often offered to the mind, will at laſt find a lucky moment when it is diſpoſed to receive them.

It is therefore urged without reaſon, as a diſcouragement to writers, that there are already books ſufficient in

in the world; that all the topics of perſuaſion have been diſcuſſed, and every important queſtion clearly ſtated, and juſtly decided; and that, therefore, there is no room to hope, that pigmies ſhould conquer where heroes have been defeated, or that the petty copiers of the preſent time ſhould advance the great work of reformation, which their predeceſſors were forced to leave unfiniſhed.

Whatever be the preſent extent of human knowledge, it is only finite, and therefore in its own nature capable of increaſe; but ſo narrow, that almoſt every underſtanding may, by a diligent application of its powers, hope to enlarge it. It is, however, not neceſſary, that a man ſhould forbear to write, till he has diſcovered ſome truth unknown before; he may be ſufficiently uſeful, by only diverſifying the ſurface of knowledge, and luring the mind by a new appearance to a ſecond view of thoſe beauties which it had paſſed over inattentively before. Every writer may find intellects correſpondent to his own, to whom his expreſſions are familiar, and his thoughts congenial; and perhaps truth is often more ſucceſsfully propagated by men of moderate abilities, who, adopting the opinions of others, have no care but to explain them clearly, than by ſubtile ſpeculatiſts and curious ſearchers, who exact from their readers powers equal to their own, and if their fabrics of ſcience be ſtrong, take no care to render them acceſſible.

For my part, I do not regret the hours which I have laid out in theſe little compoſitions. That the world has grown apparently better ſince the publication of the Adventurer, I have not obſerved; but am willing to think, that many have been affected by ſin-

gle ſentiments, of which it is their buſineſs to renew the impreſſion; that many have caught hints of truth, which is now their duty to purſue; and that thoſe who have received no improvement have wanted not opportunity, but intention to improve.

T.

No. CXXXVIII. Saturday, March 2. 1754.

Quid purè tranquillet? bonos, an dulce lucellum,
An ſecretum iter, et fallentis ſemita vitæ?

HOR.

Whether the tranquil mind and pure,
Honours of wealth our bliſs inſure;
Or down through life unknown to ſtray,
Where lonely leads the ſilent way.

FRANCIS.

HAVING conſidered the importance of authors to the welfare of the public, I am led by a natural train of thought to reflect on their condition with regard to themſelves; and to inquire what degree of happineſs or vexation is annexed to the difficult and laborious employ-

employment of providing inſtruction or entertainment for mankind.

In eſtimating the pain or pleaſure of any particular ſtate, every man, indeed, draws his deciſions from his own breaſt, and cannot with certainty determine, whether other minds are affected by the ſame cauſes in the ſame manner. Yet by this criterion we muſt be content to judge, becauſe no other can be obtained; and indeed we have no reaſon to think it very fallacious, for excepting here and there an anomalous mind, which either does not feel like others, or diſſembles its ſenſibility, we find men unanimouſly concur in attributing happineſs or miſery to particular conditions, as they agree in acknowledging the cold of winter and the heat of autumn.

If we apply to authors themſelves for an account of their ſtate, it will appear very little to deſerve envy: for they have in all ages been addicted to complaint. The neglect of learning, the ingratitude of the preſent age, and the abſurd preference by which ignorance and dullneſs often obtain favour and rewards, have been from age to age, topics of invective: and few have left their names to poſterity, without ſome appeal to future candour, from the perverſeneſs and malace of their own times.

I have, nevertheleſs, been often inclined to doubt, whether authors, however querulous, are in reality more miſerable than their fellow mortals. The preſent life is to all a ſtate of infelicity; every man, like an author, believes himſelf to merit more than he obtains, and ſolaces the preſent with the proſpect of the future; others, indeed, ſuffer thoſe diſappointments in

ſilence

ſilence, of which the writer complains, to ſhew how well he has learned the art of lamentation.

There is at leaſt one gleam of felicity, of which few writers have miſſed the enjoyment: he whoſe hopes have ſo far overpowerd his fears, as that he has reſolved to ſtand forth a candidate for fame, ſeldom fails to amuſe himſelf before his appearance, with pleaſing ſcenes of affluence or honour; while his fortune is yet under the regulation of fancy, he eaſily models it to his wiſh, ſuffers no thoughts of critics or rivals to intrude upon his mind, but counts over the bounties of patronage, or liſtens to the voice of praiſe.

Some there are, that talk very luxuriouſly of the ſecond period of an author's happineſs, and tell of the tumultuous raptures of invention, when the mind riots in imagery, and the choice ſtands ſuſpended between different ſentimenss.

Theſe pleaſures, I believe, may ſometimes be indulged to thoſe, who come to a ſubject of diſquiſitions with minds full of ideas, and with fancies ſo vigorous, as eaſily to excite, ſelect and arrange them. To write, is, indeed, no unpleaſing employment, when one ſentiment readily produces another, and both ideas and expreſſions preſent themſelves at the firſt ſummons: but ſuch happineſs, the greateſt genius does not always obtain: and common writers know it only to ſuch a degree, as to credit its poſſibility. Compoſition, is, for the moſt part, an effort of ſlow diligence and ſteady perſeverance, to which the mind is dragged by neceſſity or reſolution, and from which the attention is every moment ſtarting to more delightful amuſements.

It frequently happens, that a deſign, which, when conſidered at a diſtance, gave flattering hopes of facility,

lity, mocks us in the execution with unexpected difficulties; the mind, which, while it considered it in the groſs, imagined itſelf amply furniſhed with materials, finds ſometimes an unexpected barrenneſs and vacuity, and wonders whether all thoſe ideas are vaniſhed, which a little before ſeemed ſtruggling for emiſſion.

Sometimes many thoughts preſent themſelves; but ſo confuſed and unconnected, that they are not without difficulty reduced to method, or concatenated in a regular and dependent ſeries: the mind falls at once into a labyrinth, of which neither the beginning nor end can be diſcovered, and toils and ſtruggles without progreſs or extrication.

It is aſſerted by Horace, that "if matter be once "got together, words will be found with a very little "difficulty;" a poſition, which, though ſufficiently plauſible to be inſerted in poetical precepts, is by no means ſtrictly and philoſophically true. If words were naturally and neceſſarily conſequential to ſentiments, it would always follow, that he who has moſt knowledge, muſt have moſt eloquence, and that every man would clearly expreſs what he fully underſtood: yet we find, that to think and diſcourſe, are often the qualities of different perſons: and many books might ſurely be produced, where juſt and noble ſentiments are degraded and obſcured by unſuitable diction.

Words, therefore, as well as things, claim the care of an author. Indeed of many authors, and thoſe not uſeleſs or contemptible, words are almoſt the only care: many make it their ſtudy, not ſo much to ſtrike out new ſentiments, as to recommend thoſe which are already known to more favourable notice by fairer decorations; but every man, whether he copies or invents, whether

whether he delivers his own thoughts or thoſe of another, has often found himſelf deficient in the power of expreſſion, big with ideas which he could not utter, obliged to ranſack his memory for terms adequate to his conceptions, and at laſt unable to impreſs upon his reader the image exiſting in his own mind.

It is one of the common diſtreſſes of a writer, to be within a word of a happy period, to want only a ſingle epithet to give amplification its full force, to requireonly a correſpondent term in order to finiſh a paragraph with elegance, and make one of its members anſwer to the other: but theſe deficiencies cannot always be ſupplied; and after a long ſtudy and vexation, the paſſage is turned anew, and the web unwoven that was ſo nearly finiſhed.

But when thoughts and words are collected and adjuſted, and the whole compoſition is at laſt concluded, it ſeldom gratifies the author, when he comes coolly and deliberately to review it, with the hopes which had been excited in the fury of the performance: novelty always captivates the mind; as our thoughts riſe freſh upon us, we readily believe them juſt and original, which, when the pleaſure of production is over, we find to be mean and common, or borrowed from the works of others, and ſupplied by memory rather than invention.

But though it ſhould happen, that the writer finds no ſuch faults in his performance, he is ſtill to remember that he looks upon it with partial eyes: and when he conſiders, how much men who could judge of others with great exactneſs, have often failed of judging of themſelves, he will be afraid of deciding too haſtily in his own favour, or of allowing himſelf to contemplate with

with too much complacence, treaſure that has not yet been brought to the teſt, nor paſſed the only trial that can ſtamp its value.

From the public, and only from the public, is he to await a confirmation of his claim, and a final juſtification of ſelf-eſteem; but the public is not eaſily perſuaded to favour an author. If mankind were left to judge for themſelves, it is reaſonable to imagine, that of ſuch writings, at leaſt as deſcribe the movements of the human paſſions, and of which every man carries the archetype within him, a juſt opinion would be formed; but whoever has remarked the fate of books, muſt have found it governed by other cauſes, than general conſent ariſing from general conviction. If a new performance happens not to fall into the hands of ſome, who have courage to tell, and authority to propagate their opinion, it often remains long in obſcurity, and perhaps periſhes unknown and unexamined. A few, a very few, commonly conſtitute the taſte of the time; the judgment which they have once pronounced, ſome are too lazy to diſcuſs, and ſome too timorous to contradict: it may, however, be, I think, obſerved that their power is greater to depreſs than exalt, as mankind are more credulous of cenſure than of praiſe.

This perverſion of the public judgment, is not to be raſhly numbered amongſt the miſeries of an author; ſince it commonly ſerves, after miſcarriage, to reconcile him to himſelf. Becauſe the world has ſometimes paſſed an unjuſt ſentence, he readily concludes the ſentence unjuſt by which his performance is condemned; becauſe ſome have been exalted above their merits by partiality, he is ſure to aſcribe the ſucceſs of a rival, not to the merit of his work, but the zeal of his patrons.

trons. Upon the whole, as the author ſeems to ſhare all the common miſeries of life, he appears to partake likewiſe of its lenitives and abatements.

T.

No. CXXXIX. Tueſday, March 5. 1754.

Ipſe viam tantum potuit docuiſſe repertam
Aonas ad montes, longèque oſtendere Muſas,
Plaudentes celſæ choreas in vertice rupis.

VIDA.

I only pointed out the paths that lead
The panting youth to ſteep Parnaſſus' head,
And ſhew'd the tuneful muſes from afar,
Mixt in a ſolemn choir and dancing there.

PITT.

HE that undertakes to ſuperintend the morals and the taſte of the public, ſhould attentively conſider, what are the peculiar irregularities and defects that characterize the times: for though ſome have contended, that men have always been vicious and fooliſh in the ſame degree; yet their vices and follies are known to have been

been not only different but oppoſite in their kind. The diſeaſe of the time has been ſometimes a fever and ſometimes a lethargy; and he, therefore, who ſhould always preſcribe the ſame remedy, would be juſtly ſcorned as a quack, the diſpenſer of a noſtrum, which, however efficacious, muſt, if indiſcriminately applied, produce as much evil as good. There was a time, when every man, who was ambitious of religion or virtue, enliſted himſelf in a cruſade, or buried himſelf in a hermitage: and he who ſhould then have declaimed againſt lukewarmneſs and ſcepticiſm, would have acted juſt as abſurdly as he, who ſhould warn the preſent age againſt prieſtcraft and ſuperſtition, or ſet himſelf gravely to prove the lawfulneſs of pleaſure, to lure the hermit from his cell, and deliver the penitent from ſuicide.

But as vicious manners have not differed more than vicious taſte, there was a time when every literary character was diſgraced by an impertinent oſtentation of ſkill in abſtruſe ſcience, and an habitual familiarity with books written in the dead languages; every man, therefore, was a pedant, in proportion as he deſired to be thought a ſcholar. The preacher and the pleader ſtrung together claſſical quotations with the ſame labour, affectation and inſignificance; truths however obvious, and opinions however indiſputable, were illuſtrated and confirmed by the teſtimonies of Tully or Horace; and Seneca and Epictetus were ſolemnly cited, to evince the certainty of death or the fickleneſs of fortune. The diſcourſes of Taylor are crowded with extracts from the writers of the porch and the academy; and it is ſcarcely poſſible to forbear ſmiling at a marginal note of Lord Coke, in which he gravely

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acquaints his reader with an excellence that he might otherwiſe have overlooked: "This," ſays he, "is the "thirty-third time that Virgil hath been quoted in "this work." The mixture, however, is ſo prepoſterous, that to thoſe who can read Coke with pleaſure, theſe paſſages will appear like a dancer who ſhould intrude on the ſolemnityo ſena : ; and to thoſe who have a taſte only for polite literature, like a fountain or a palm-tree in the deſerts of Arabia.

It appears by the eſſays of Montaigne and La Motte le Veyer, that this affectation extended to France; but the abſurdity was too groſs to remain long after the revival of literature. It was ridiculed here ſo early as the "Silent Woman" of Ben Johnſon: and afterwards more ſtrongly and profeſſedly in the character of Hudibras, who decorates his flimſy orations with gawdy patches of Latin, and patches of tiſſue from the ſchoolmen. The ſame taſk was alſo undertaken in France by Balzac, in a ſatire called "Barbon."

Wit is more rarely diſappointed of its purpoſe than wiſdom; and it is no wonder that this ſpecies of pedantry, in itſelf ſo ridiculous and deſpicable, was ſoon brought into contempt by theſe powers, againſt which truth and rectitude have not always maintained their dignity. The features of learning began inſenſibly to loſe their auſterity, and her air became engaging and eaſy: philoſophy was now decorated by the graces.

The obſtruſe truths of aſtronomy were explained by Fontenelle to a lady by moonlight; juſtneſs and propriety of thought and ſentiment were diſcuſſed by Bohours amidſt the delicacies of a garden; and Algorotti introduced the Newtonian theory of light and colours to the toilet. Addiſon remarks that Socrates was

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ſaid to have brought philoſophy down from heaven to inhabit among men: "And I," ſays he, "ſhall be ambitious to have it ſaid of me, that I have brought "philoſophy out of cloſets and libraries, ſchools and "colleges, to dwell in clubs and aſſemblies, at tea-"tables, and in coffee-houſes."

But this purpoſe has in ſome meaſure been defeated by its ſucceſs; and we have been driven from the one extreme with ſuch precipitation, that we have not ſtopped in the medium, but gone on to the other.

Learning has been diveſted of the peculiarities of a college dreſs, that ſhe might mix in polite aſſemblies, and be admitted to domeſtic familiarity; but by this means ſhe has been confounded with ignorance and levity. Thoſe who before could diſtinguiſh her only by the ſingularity of her garb, cannot now diſtinguiſh her at all; and whenever ſhe aſſerts the dignity of her character, ſhe has reaſon to fear that ridicule which is inſeparably connected with the remembrance of her dreſs; ſhe is, therefore, in danger of being driven back to the college, where, ſuch is her transformation, ſhe may at laſt be refuſed admittance; for, inſtead of learning's having elevated converſation, converſation has degraded learning; and the barbarous and inaccurate manner in which an extemporary ſpeaker expreſſes a haſty conception, is now contended to be the rule by which an author ſhould write. It ſeems, therefore, that to correct the taſte of the preſent generation, literary ſubjects ſhould be again introduced among the polite and gay, without labouring too much to diſguiſe them like common prattle; and that converſation ſhould be weeded of folly and impertinence, of common-place

rhetoric, jingling phraſes, and trite repartee, which are echoed from one viſitor to another without the labour of thought, and have been ſuffered by better underſtandings in the dread of an imputation of pedantry. I am of opinion, that with this view Swift wrote his "Polite Converſation;" and where he has plucked up a weed, the writers who ſucceed him ſhould endeavour to plant a flower. With this view, Criticiſm has in this paper been intermixed with ſubjects of greater importance; and it is hoped that our faſhionable converſation will no longer be the diſgrace of rational beings; and that men of genius and literature will not give the ſanction of their example to popular folly, and ſuffer their evenings to paſs in hearing or in telling the exploits of a pointer, diſcuſſing a method to prevent wines from being prickled, or ſolving a difficult caſe in backgammon.

I would not, however, be thought ſolicitous to confine the converſation even of ſcholars to literary ſubjects, but only to prevent ſuch ſubjects from being totally excluded. And it may be remarked that the preſent inſignificance of converſation has a very extenſive effect: excellence that is not underſtood will never be rewarded, and without hope of reward few will labour to excel; every writer will be tempted to negligence, in proportion as he deſpiſes the judgment of thoſe who are to determine his merit; and as it is no man's intereſt to write that which the public is not diſpoſed to read, the productions of the preſs will always be accommodated to popular taſte; and in proportion as the world is inclined to be ignorant, little will be taught them. Thus the Greek and Roman architecture are

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diſcarded for the novelties of China; the Ruins of Palmyra, and the copies of the capital pictures of Correggio, are neglected for Gothic deſigns, and burleſque political prints; the tinſel of a Burletta has more admirers than the gold of Shakeſpeare, though it now receives new ſplendour from the mint, and, like a medal, is illuſtrious, not only for intrinſic worth, but for beauty of expreſſion.

Perhaps it may be thought, that if this be, indeed, the ſtate of learning and taſte, an attempt to improve it by a private hand is romantic, and the hope of ſucceſs chimerical: but to this I am not ſolicitous to give other anſwer, than that ſuch an attempt is conſiſtent with the character in which this paper is written; and that the Adventurer can aſſert, upon claſſical authority, that in brave attempts it is glorious even to fail.

Z.

No. CXL. Saturday, March 9. 1754.

Deſine Mænalios, mea tibia, deſine cantus.

VIRG.

Now ceaſe, my pipe, now ceaſe, Mænalian ſtrains.

WARTON.

WHEN this work was firſt planned, it was determined, that whatever might be its ſucceſs, it ſhould not be continued as a paper, till it became unweildy as a book: for no immediate advantage would have induced the Adventurer to write what, like a news-paper, was deſigned but for a day; and he knew, that the pieces of which it would conſiſt, might be multiplied till they were thought too numerous to collect, and too coſtly to purchaſe, even by thoſe who ſhould allow them to be excellent in their kind. It was ſoon agreed, that four volumes, when they ſhould be printed in a pocket ſize, would circulate better than more, and that ſcarce any of the purpoſes of publication could be effected by leſs;

leſs: the work, therefore, was limited to four volumes, and four volumes are now completed.

A moral writer, of whatever abilities, who labours to reclaim thoſe to whom vice is become habitual, and who are become veterans in infidelity, muſt ſurely labour to little purpoſe. Vice is a gradual and eaſy deſcent, where it firſt deviates from the level of innocence: but the declivity at every pace becomes more ſteep, and thoſe who deſcend, deſcend every moment with greater rapidity. As a moraliſt, therefere, I determined to mark the firſt inſenſible gradation to ill; to caution againſt thoſe acts which are not generally believed to incur guilt, but of which indubitable vice and hopeleſs miſery are the natural and almoſt neceſſary conſequences.

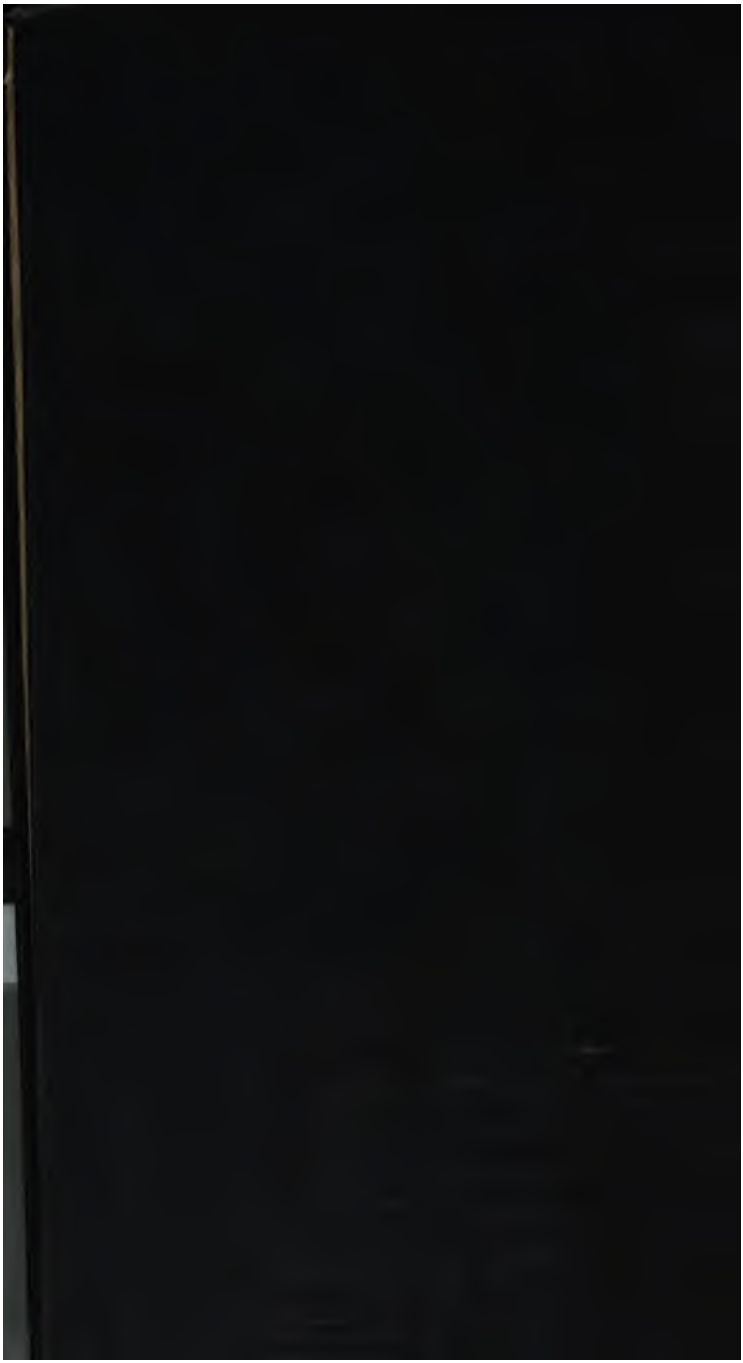
As I was upon theſe principles to write for the Young and the Gay; for thoſe who are entering the path of life, I knew that it would be neceſſary to amuſe the imagination while I was approaching the heart; and that I could not hope to fix the attention, but by engaging the paſſions. I have, therefore, ſometimes led them into the regions of fancy, and ſometimes held up before them the mirror of life; I have concatenated events, rather than deduced conſequences by logical reaſoning; and have exhibited ſcenes of proſperity and diſtreſs, as more forcibly perſuaſive than the rhetoric of declamation.

In the ſtory of Meliſſa, I have endeavoured to repreſs romantic hopes, by which the reward of laborious induſtry is deſpiſed; and have founded affluence and honour upon an act of generous integrity, to which few would have thought themſelves obliged. In the life of Opſinous, I have ſhewn the danger of the firſt

ſpeculative defection, and endeavoured to demonſtrate the neceſſary dependence of Virtue upon Religion. Amurath's firſt advance to cruelty was ſtriking a dog. The wretchedneſs of Haſſan was produced merely by the want of poſitive virtue; and that of Mirza by the ſolitarineſs of his devotion. The diſtreſs of lady Freeman ariſes from a common and allowed deviation from truth; and in the two papers upon marriage, the importance of minute particulars is illuſtrated and diſplayed. With this clue, the reader will be able to diſcover the ſame deſign in almoſt every paper that I have written, which may eaſily be known from the reſt by having no ſignature * at the bottom. Among theſe, however, Number forty-four was the voluntary contribution of a ſtranger, and Number forty-two † the gift of a friend; ſo were the firſt hints on which I wrote the ſtory of Eugenio, and the letter ſigned Tim. Cogdie.

I did not, however, undertake to execute this ſcheme alone; not only becauſe I wanted ſufficient leiſure, but becauſe ſome degree of ſameneſs is produced by the peculiarities of every writer; and it was thought that the conceptions and expreſſions of another, whoſe pieces ſhould have a general coincidence with mine, would produce a variety, and by increaſing entertainment facilitate inſtruction.

With this view, the pieces that appear in the beginning of the work ſigned A were procured; but this reſource ſoon failing, I was obliged to carry on the publication

* By the ſignature is meant the letter or mark, placed on the left hand ſide of the page; not the ſubſcribed names of the aſſumed characters in which ſeveral of the papers are written.

† *Said, by miſtake, to be Number forty ſeven, in all the former editions.*